MY EXPERIENCE WITH INDIANS

JOHN JAMES

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MY EXPERIENCE WITH INDIANS

JOHN JAMES
(The Author)
Aged 72

My
EXPERIENCE
With
INDIANS

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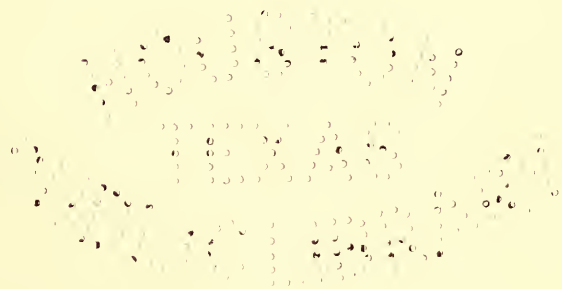
By

JOHN JAMES



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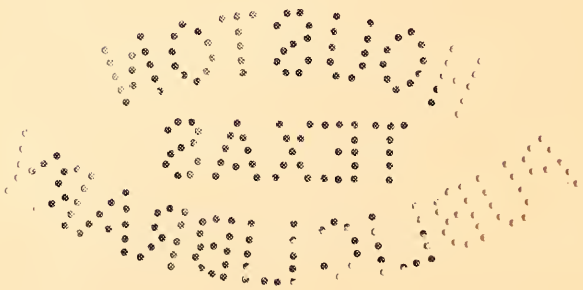

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DEDICATION

GO THOU my dear little book. YOU have a mission. You carry a message of truth that will correct the errors and effects thereof, made by ignorant and prejudiced, would-be historians, who have dealt falsely with a truly great people—the real Americans—the RED MEN.

For one-third to a half century, you have rested in the sacred archives of my memory, and but for the lack of literary training I long delayed—in indecision—the wish of sending you out, being conscious that your verbal imperfections, would meet with harsh criticisms; but the urge was so great, and every remembrance of your story was so real, so bright with the luster of truth, that I have finally concluded to dress you up as best I can, and let you go forth with your true story, believing that multiplied thousands of interested readers will forget our outward (verbal) appearance, as they become better acquainted with our real self—THE STORY.

—THE AUTHOR.

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NOTICE
Please do not write in this
book or turn down the pages

Chapter I.

A Trip to Texas. The Boy's Observations.

These, to me, now very peculiar experiences with Indians, began in the fall of 1869; when my father with his family and two wagons, together with a neighbor—Benjamin Ford, with his family and two wagons, were moving from Douglas County. Illinois, 130 miles south of Chicago, to Johnson County, Texas. Both were large families—19 in all—and a merry time, we younger ones did have. The wagons being heavily laden with household goods, women and children, we older boys walked nearly all the way. I was the eldest boy of the bunch, but very small for my age of 17, past. Even then I was a very close observer, and seeing so many things that were new and interesting to me, I kept a diary of our travels, taking time at the noon hour each day to jot down the various events and places passed, since the noon of the day previous. That little book became a very interesting history, and often the means of settling later discussions of the things that happened and of places of our long journey of some 1,200 miles of distance, and eight weeks of travel.

A few weeks before we started on this trip, I had attended a singing school, and as my voice had cleared

up from its change of about a year previous, and having a good memory, I had formed the habit of singing "by heart" and enjoyed it very much. Mother often said in later years, that "Johnny sang all the way to Texas."

It was while coming through the Indian Territory, that I had my first and most thrilling experience with the Indians. We had crossed many deep and wide rivers, and had crossed over "Granny's Mountain," traveling over the old "Military Road," that led from Fort Scott, Kansas, to San Antonio, Texas, and had passed the middle of the territory, with everything going well, until we came to Coal Creek, which was quite a deep stream, with high steep banks, where our road crossed, a few miles from where McAlister was located, several years later. Arriving on the north bank of this stream, we found it up bank full, and no boat or bridge, to enable us to cross over; so we struck camp, to await its going down. The weather was bright and unusually warm for the season—November. Our women folks took advantage of the stop to do up their washing, and the men to recruit the meat supply, by hunting wild game. I had a good gun, but on account of my eye affliction, it was thought best that I remain in camp, to help the women, by getting up wood and water and to watch the teams, that had been turned

loose to graze on the cane brake that covered the bottoms of that side of the creek. The stock enjoyed their much needed rest and good pasture, and gave me no trouble. I had time to fish and sing. The water was too muddy and swift to make a success at fishing.

VISIT TO INDIAN VILLAGE—CHAPTER I

Chapter II.

A VISIT TO AN INDIAN VILLAGE

One afternoon I picked up my gun to hunt near the camp. Noticing a dim trail that led down the side of the creek bank, bordered by thick tall cane on each side, I followed it and noticed that the trail grew plainer as I proceeded, with an occasional switch-off to the bank of the stream. I saw nothing to shoot at, but was entranced with the seclusion that surrounded me. My trail kept close to the bank of the winding stream, and I did not notice the time or distance I had traveled. All of a sudden I came up to the rear end of a hut, built of small logs daubed with mud and thatched with cane. I stopped. I listened, but did not hear anything, so I crept on to the front end of the cabin, and there I saw a clearing out in front, and could see other huts across the clearing which was about one hundred yards across. Again I listened and thought I heard some voices, not far distant, I crept to the corner and saw that the clearing was in the form of a semi-circle back from the bank of the stream, with huts sitting near each other in the edge of the cane, with doors in the end that faced the clearing, which was smooth and clear of stumps and logs, except near the

huts, where they were left for seats and tables. From my peep-hole around the corner of the hut, I caught sight of women and children of all ages; back in the bend of the half circle. I dodged back and was about to retreat, but my everlasting curiosity got the best of me, and I quietly slipped back to the corner of the hut, and slyly peeped around at the women and children, the latter up to nearly grown, all robed only in the beautiful sunbeams of an autumn afternoon, and the former in like condition, except that they had the skins of some wild animals tied about their waist. What a sight that was to me! How I wished that I could see better! I would rub the watery film from my eyes, and look again, and thus I was entranced with the sight that was out there, less than 50 yards from where I stood. After a short time, I heard a noise off to my right, and looking, I saw an old squaw walking towards the others, but pointing toward the cabin where I stood. I saw that I had been discovered. I took to my heels and ran some distance, then stopped to see if I were being followed. Hearing nothing, I again ran on for a while and again stopped to listen, and again hearing nothing, I walked more leisurely back to camp, not wishing any one to see that I was frightened and exhausted. I was amazed! I had made a discovery, and did not care to make it known. My

mind was filled and thrilled, with my strange experience. I had feasted my eyes on a very strange sight, never dreamed of before, not even in Dore's pictures of Dante's Inferno. The more I pondered over it, the more determined I was to keep my discovery all to myself. I sat down on a log and began to call back the scenes to refresh my memory, until it appeared more like a dream; but a reality I knew it all was. I had discovered an Indian village hidden away from the vulgar gaze of the public, who traveled on "Uncle Sam's" highway not far distant whose loud talking they could hear, and doubtless often had, from some hidden covert, seen the white people traveling, without being themselves seen, and thus in their peaceful seclusion, they could unhindered, enjoy the freedom of their preference, and the customs of their ancestors; but I declare it was a sight and a revelation to me, an inexperienced boy. I soon arose from my seat on the log, and taking my gun and fishing tackle, went down to the water's edge and taking my seat on a projecting root, beside the ford, gave myself up to meditations of my strange discovery and experience.

Soon the mail carrier came up on the opposite side of the stream, as he had done every afternoon, during the time we had been in camp. After placing the mail sack in the little boat, pushed off into the stream, and

came swiftly across, leading his well trained horse, as he swam after the boat. He made the landing, and leading his horse out of the water, tied the boat to a small tree, replacing the mail sack and mounting his horse, was soon out of sight. Then the adventurous idea of a foolish boy possessed me. I took my gun, untied the boat, got in and pushed off, as I had seen the postman do, and began my first experience at rowing a boat. Seeing that I was drifting down stream, I turned toward the bank I had just left, where the water was not so swift, I succeeded in again getting back to the ford, then pulled out, this time up-stream. After much hard pulling on the oars, I landed on the other side a few steps below the ford. I pulled the boat up to the tree where the postman had untied it. After tying it securely and taking my gun, began crossing a narrow valley and went up the hill to where we had been hearing dogs barking, and chickens crowing, ever since we had been in camp. On reaching the top of the hill, I saw, just to the right of the road, a log storehouse, with a porch in the front end where a bundle of fodder and a few ears of corn hung to a post. Going to the door, I saw no one inside, so stepped away. About 75 yards to the rear was a splendid hewed loghouse with two front rooms, a wide hall, and long deep porch in front. Between the store and the house, I saw

four Indian men butchering hogs. Going to where they were, I sat down on a log. They saw me but did not speak to me, nor I to them. I noticed that they had dug a hole in the ground, filled it with water, and had a big fire nearby, with many rock in the fire. They had made the water hot with these hot rocks. We had bought some pork at an Indian store, a few days back, that had been skinned, like we skin beef, but these Indians were scalding and dressing their hogs very nicely. Instead of scraping the hair off with a butcherknife, they rubbed it off with coarse sand rocks. When they had hung up the hog they were then dressing, one of the men came to me and said in broken English, "Creek he go down?"

I said "No!" Then he said "How you cross?"

I answered "In the boat."

He shook his head, and turning, said something to the other Indians. Then I suspected that I had done wrong in using the boat.

He said, "You come far?" I said yes. Then he asked, "You cross heap big rivers?"

I answered "Yes."

Holding up two fingers, he said, "Cross two heap big rivers?"

Yes, was my reply, thinking he meant the Mississippi

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and Missouri rivers. He grunted and pointed away to the northeast, and I nodded.

He then said, "You go to houchie-town and see squaws?"

Hesitatingly, I said yes, but did not understand how he knew it, as I had not seen any one cross at the ford.

Then he said, "You go see squaws, he sell you heap good fish, cooked heap good. Squaws, he want cups, pans, knives and forks, and bucket. He give you heap good fish."

I said nothing, did not know what to say, but began to entertain the thought that I would have the chance to again visit the squaws. After they all had taken a good look at my gun, which was an old 1812 army model, I took it and went down to the creek, untied the boat, got in and pushed off and was soon across, leaving the boat tied, just as the postman had done. I went up the bank to camp, and after taking a red-hot scolding from father, for molesting the boat, I skulked off to my fishing place, not to fish but to plan how I was going to manage for another visit down the trail.

I had only told the folks that there was a store on the hill, where they had feed and meat for sale. I never told a word that the Indians said to me, nor I to them.

JOHN JAMES

A Boy of 17, When He Visited the Indian Squaws, as Narrated In Chapter 1

I hadn't gotten over my pout, for having to stay around camps.

Next morning the creek was falling, but not yet fordable. The men and larger boys, took their guns and went to the hills to hunt. I did not want to go, as I had planned otherwise.

Sometime after they had left and the stock had returned from feeding on the cane, I believed the plans that I had thought out would work. I went to mother and asked her for a bucket, two pans, two cups, two spoons and two knives and forks, and telling her that I knew where there were some Indian fishers, who wanted such things, and that they would give me fish for them, and that when we came to a store where such things were for sale, I would buy some new things in place of them. While I had withheld part of the truth, I had not told a lie. She let me have the things I had asked for, and with my gun, I again started down the lone trail.

INDIANS WATCHING FOR FISH—CHAPTER II

Chapter III.

THE SQUAWS MAKE THE BOY SING BUT GIVE HIM FISH

Trustfulness has always been a virtue with me, even to a fault, and trusting the words of those Indian men, I was encouraged to make this venture again, to see the squaw's paradise. I walked on boldly, with my mind all the while on the other end of the trail, anticipating what I should see, and wondering what would be the result of my adventure. I soon came to the hut, behind which I had peeped in on squaw heaven, the day before. I walked out into the clearing, and there, just to my left, in front of the next hut, sat an old squaw, splitting cane reeds for basket work. She looked at me, but did not say a word. Off to the left in the bend of the half-circle where I had seen the squaws on the previous afternoon, there were quite a bunch of them, and a few others scattered around the half-circle, sitting in front of the huts, all seeming to be busy. The dogs began to bark and I halted, but the squaws drove them back, and that gave me more courage, so I advanced, noting that all had seen me. I saw that they all were actually dressed as I had seen them from the cabin corner the previous day. Somehow I was ashamed to

gaze on the sights, but soon became used to it, as there were so many and so close around me.

I saw other things also that I had not noticed on the previous visit. There were several heaps of ashes and live coals, all around in front of the cabins, where wood had been burning. Over these live coals were sticks resting on forks, strung with meat of some kind. I noticed a basket about half full of fish, that had just been brought up from their traps.

Casting my eyes around, I saw that all the squaws and children were looking at me, with expressionless faces, stolid and inexpressive as so many statues of dark stone, but I detected no anger or danger in their attitude. I smiled, and laying my gun on the ground and taking the things out of the bucket I placed them on a stump, and pointing to the basket I said, "I want fish."

Many of the squaws, old and young, gathered about the stump and chattered while they looked at the things I had brought.

Presently an old squaw, pointing to the sun, made a sweeping circle with one arm, as the sun turns, and stopping her hand, pointing to about where the sun was on the previous afternoon when I was there peeping around the corner of the cabin, then she pointed at me.

I thought I understood her sign-language, but said nothing.

She again made the same motion, and pointing to her eyes and to me, then off to the hut. I knew for sure then, that she wanted to know if it was I who had peeped around the cabin the day before.

I said "Yes," and nodded.

Pointing to the basket, I again said, "I want fish;" but they paid no attention to what I said, and I was getting nervous.

A young, but full grown squaw began to make signs as opening and closing a knife, and pointed to my pocket. I was catching on to their signs quite fast, so I took out my knife and handed it to her. It was a good one that I had just bought before starting on that trip. It had a large blade in one end, and two blades in the other, and was the best knife I had ever owned, I was foolish about it. She opened and closed all the blades several times, while the other squaws looked on.

Again I said "Fish," and again they disregarded my request.

The young squaw turned back into the brush at the rear of the cabins and cut a forked stick, and while she trimmed it, an old squaw stood before me, and pointing to her mouth, she began to make a noise, like

singing, and then pointed to my mouth; I said nothing, and she repeated the signs. Then I knew that she wanted me to sing. I had concluded that they were intent on having their way with me, and that I would have to sing, or do whatever they wished, if I got any fish, or even got away. So I began to sing, "I want to be an angel, and with the angels stand, etc.," feebly at first, but as I proceeded, my voice grew stronger, and I sang all of that good old Sunday School song.

The old squaw made more signs for me to sing again, and I sang "There is a happy land, far, far away," etc., and I made it ring in the stillness of that assembly. The squaws were not satisfied and wanted more singing. I sang "On Jordan's stormy banks I stand, and cast a wishful eye," etc., singing all the six stanzas.

Then I pointed to the basket and said "I want fish."

The squaws took up sticks and began to rake roasted fish out of the beds of embers, and the young squaw began to poke the long end of her stick through the gills of the fish—fine large ones—three or four pounders, and after thus stringing about a dozen fine fish on the forked stick, she handed them to me. I shook my head and asked her for my knife. She shook her head, and I refused to take the fish. Then they took up my gun and began to examine it.

I took the cap off the tube, and with the ramrod,

drew out the wadding and poured the shot and powder on the ground. The squaws seemed to be interested in the powder. I took a piece of bark and scraped up some of it and threw it into the fire. The flash amused them and I scraped up some more of the powder, and threw it into the fire also, then they pointed to my powder horn, but I shook my head and again asked for my knife, holding out my hand for it, but the young squaw shook her head, turned and cut another stick, and they raked out and strung some more fine fish. I took the things I had brought and putting them in the bucket and handing it to the young squaw, I said, "I want my knife," reaching for her hand, but she drew back, and the old squaw picked up my gun, and the two strings of fish, handing them to me, she pointed toward the trail. I knew what that meant, and casting an angry look toward the young squaw, I started, but she stepped in ahead of me, and pointing toward the sun, she made one circle with her arm, and stopped with her finger pointing toward the sun, and then pointing up toward our camp, and to me she made a sweeping draw of her arm, back to their jungle, which I took to mean that she wanted me to come back, the next morning at that time of day. I nodded and started on, but the old squaws had come up and made more signs for me to sing. I had come for a picnic, but saw that the squaws

were having one out of me, and that, without even a smile, and the sights had ceased to be of interest to me. My curiosity had been satisfied, yea, glutted, and I had enough of it. I had lost a knife that I would not have given for a thousand years of such sights, but before I could get away, I had to sing two more songs, which I did willingly, at the top of my voice, hoping mother would hear me and not become uneasy, on account of my delay. As the young squaw started back, I held out my hand and said "Please give me my knife," but she shook her head, and all turned back, and I proceeded up the trail, heavily loaded with fish.

On leaving the Indian village, I noticed that a large, tall tree had been so cut down that it lodged in the top of an overhanging tree from the opposite side of the creek, thus making a bridge-like passageway over the creek, when the water was up, making connection with the store, before mentioned, which was but a few hundred yards up the hill. I also conjectured that the switch trails, leading down the bank, were to their fish traps; also that those squaws had been spying on our camp and had heard me singing and doubtless knew me, when I entered their retreat.

On arriving in camp, I found that the men had returned from their hunt, and seeing me approach with two long strings of fish, looked surprised. As soon as

mother looked at the fish, she said that they were not fit to eat, as they had been cooked alive, i. e. without being dressed. I remembered seeing some of the Indian children eating fish, so I took a nice one and began peeling off the dry skin, and then flaking off the nice white meat, ate it, and told mother that it was the best that I had ever tasted, and it was too. Father tried one and said it was really good. So I passed my fish around, and every one in camp had all the fish they could eat, and all pronounced them the best they had ever eaten.

After our feast on the Indian-cooked fish, I went off to myself feeling "heap big." I was a hero, I had made a great discovery and had had a wonderful experience, I knew so much more than any of them, and was determined to not tell it while we were there, but one thing kept me somewhat humiliated, the loss of my good knife. However I was getting some revenge for having to stay around camp. Yes, sweet revenge, and I was satisfied. I kept all my wonderful knowledge to myself. It was too precious to divide; then I feared I could not tell it so that they could understand it, just as it was. My mind was fully made up to go back the next day and try to get my knife. I fancied that if I went back and sang for them again, that they would give it to me; in fact I thought that was what the young

squaw meant, when by her signs she had invited me back, but the next morning the water had run down so we could ford the creek.

Chapter IV.

THE CHIEF BEGS FATHER FOR "THE BOY," SAYING, "HEAP GOOD SQUAW, HE LOVE THE BOY, WE BE GOOD TO HIM AND MAKE HIM BIG CHIEF."

The morning was bright and preparations were soon made to start, double-teaming being necessary to pull the wagons up the slippery steep banks—that done and all were ready to again take up our journey to Texas.

On arriving at the top of the hill and store we saw many Indians, all armed, some with guns and some with bows and arrows. There must have been forty or fifty of them. This somewhat frightened me. I thought of the boat, and the squaws, and wondered if I had in some way caused some unintentional offense. I noticed that none of the guns were held in a threatening manner, and that all the bow-strings were slackened. I walked up to the side of the front wagon, while father got out to buy some feed. The Indian who had talked to me, on the former occasion, said to me "You go, see squaws, get fish."

I said, "Yes."

Then he said to father, "I want boy. I make him heap big chief."

Father answered, "The boy don't want to stay with you."

I spoke up quickly, saying "Yes I do," but mother said "No! No!"

The chief (we afterward learned that he was one of the tribal chiefs, whose English name was Charley LeFlore) said to father, "You stay with us, we make you heap big house, we give you land and cattle and horses and make you heap big rich, like Missionary Buckner."

At the mention of Buckner, father looked at the Indian, and said "Where is Missionary Buckner?"

And the chief pointing back northward, said "Two days' journey, over the mountains."

Father asked, "Do you know Missionary Buckner?"

And the chief answered "Yes, he heap good man."

It was the same Rev. Henry F. Buckner, whom father had known in Kentucky, when they were young men, and had often gone fox hunting with him and his younger brother, Robert C. Buckner, who afterward came to Texas, and was founder of the Buckner Orphans' Home, at Dallas, and whose father, "Uncle Daniel Buckner," was the first missionary who came over into Kentucky from Tennessee after the split in the Baptist church, over the subject of "Foreign Missions," and who had baptized my mother in Pitman

creek, in Pulaski County, Kentucky, in February, 1852. The ice had to be cut for that occasion, and I was born April 29, following, or 1852.

No wonder father was interested in hearing of Missionary Buckner, whom he knew had been sent many years before, as missionary to the Creek Indians. Father spoke to mother about going back to see Brother Buckner, but mother, remembering the hard time we had crossing over the mountains and many deep streams, thought it best that we go on with Mr. Ford, who, having observed father's indecision, had pulled on ahead. Father told the Indian that he knew Missionary Buckner, and his brother Robert, and their father, in Kentucky many years ago. The chief asked father if "He was heap good Christian?"

Father answered, "Yes!" and the Indian pointing to me said "He too?" and father said "yes!"

Then the chief took father by the hand and said "Pale-face brother."

Father said "Are you a christian?" And he said "Yes, me pray heap much," and pointing to the other Indians said "He all pray heap much, me help Missionary Buckner baptize Indians."

So we had met a lot of Baptist brothers among the red men. Then again the chief said to father, "You all stay with us, we be heap good to you. Indian doctor,

he cure boy's eyes, and Missionary Buckner, he make him heap big missionary. Squaws, he say boy sings heap good."

Mother, seeing that Mr. Ford was driving on, said to father, "Let's go!"

Then the Indian took me by the hand and said "Heap good squaw, he love boy, give him to me, we be good to him."

Then I thought of that "heap good squaw," who got my knife, and seeing that mother was weeping, I said, "I do not want to stay," but I really did want to stay, and had it not been for mother's tears, I would have done so. I never got away from the feelings and impressions of that day, and fourteen years afterward, I was back among the Choctaw Indians doing mission work, about 75 miles southeast of McAlister, which will be recorded in a later chapter of this true story. We drove on, but this story has been fresh in my mind ever since.

CHIEF WANTED TO KEEP BOY—CHAPTER III

CHAPTER V.

TEXAS INDIANS. THREE YEARS

The following incidents happened nearly three years after those narrated in former chapters, and is also a true story:

In July, 1872, I was teaching a small country school in the southeast corner of Wise County, Texas, about three miles east of where Rome is now located.

At that time there lived in that sparse settlement, two families of half-breed Indians. One of the families, named Brock, had a cabin built on vacant land. He had no field or stock, except a few riding ponies. He was not liked by any of the white people. Two grown daughters were in the family, but they never went out, neither did any of the family work for the white settlers, and they were regarded as harborers of thieves, and other bad characters, and helped the wild Indians to locate and steal stock from the white settlers. At that time the wild Comanche Indians raided on the white settlements almost every light moon. The other family whose name was Dawson, was liked by all who knew them. Nick Dawson and family worked hard, making small crops and helping their white neighbors. He was sending four of his children to my school, three girls and

one boy, all nice children, from the ages of sixteen and down. Dawson was killed by the wild Comanches in one of their raids near his home. The daughters were very beautiful. Prof. Griffin Ford, a well known teacher here in Myers community in 1870 and '71 married the oldest, Miss Fannie, in 1873. (She has been a widow now for many years, and lives in Montague county, east of Bowie, Texas. My own brother, George, married the next oldest, Miss Sallie, about 1876, when she was only 15 years old.

Dear Sallie lived only one year afterward and died in my home, the most beautiful christian death I ever witnessed. Just before she passed away, she said to her young husband, "George, the angels have come for me, don't you see them, right up there?" And her last words were "Glory, glory!"

It was at this school one afternoon, that two young Indian women rode up to the door of the log school house, jumping off their ponies, they hobbled them out to graze, and bringing their beautifully beaded blankets (they had no saddles) to the door, I invited them in, and made room for them, just to the right of my desk. They were plainly, though neatly dressed, and the lighter colored girl said to me, that she had heard of my school, and as she had never been in a school, she came to see how a school was conducted. This she said in

good English. She was real good looking, and about my age, 20. The darker girl said nothing, and did not seem to be interested in anything. Time for recess soon came, which gave me an opportunity to talk to the girl, who said she was Cherokee half-breed. That her father was a U. S. army officer named Star, at one of the reservations in the Indian Territory, and that her mother was a full blood Cherokee, who belonged to a roving band of that tribe. She told of how she learned to talk English from white men, who often traveled with them on hunting excursions, into the western territory and the panhandle of Texas. She also said that she could read, and had read some in a Bible, that had been given to her mother by a missionary by the name of Buckner, in the Creek Nation, and that she liked to read about that wonderful man called Jesus. I called in some of the larger boys and girls and we sang several religious songs. She joined in and helped in some of them, saying she had learned them at the mission stations. Having a small pocket Testament with me, I gave it to her, and she thanked me for it, saying she would read it every day. I called school, and they stayed with us until the work of the day was finished. Their ponies having fed quite a distance from the house, I sent two of the larger boys to bring them back. Seeing that the school girls were looking at their

blankets, she told them how they were made. The heavy cloth from bear-grass fiber, and that the beads had been bought at an Indian agency, and of how long a time it took them to make them. On leaving she told me her name was Bell Star. She also told the other girl's name, which was Indian, and I do not remember it, (we afterward learned that she was one of the Brock girls,) and I should perhaps have forgotten her name, but several years later, I read in the papers of the noted band of desperados composed of Indians and whites, led by the noted "Bell Star." From the published descriptions I read of her, I have always since believed that she was the Bell Star who visited my school in Wise County, Texas, in July, 1872.

It was during this same school and in August, 1872, that the Elder Joseph Parker of Weatherford, Texas, and two other preachers of his faith (Hardshell Baptists,) came to Deep Creek school house, eight miles south of Decatur, in Wise County to preach. Joseph Parker was a brother to Cynthia Ann Parker who was stolen from her home near where Corsicana now is, when she was about 12 years old, by a band of Comanche Indians, and afterward became the wife of the Comanche Chief, Quanah; and was the mother of that other Chief Quanah Parker who was a friend of the whites, and died a few years ago in Oklahoma.

After Cynthia Ann Parker had been with the Comanches for several years, she was recaptured by Captain Sul Ross and his Texas Rangers. During the fight and chase, she rode up to Captain Ross and threw her baby into his arms, saying "Me white squaw." She was brought back to her people who were then living at Weatherford, but was not satisfied. She had come to love the Indian people and life, better than the whites, and pined for her Indian husband, and picking a suitable opportunity, she escaped and went back to the Comanche reservation, taking her Indian boy with her.

I had never heard a "Hard Shell" preach, so I borrowed a mule from father, and went over to Deep Creek to that service, about six miles to the west of father's place. Being a song leader in those days, I was asked to "pitch the tunes." All three preachers took a round at the same text, in their peculiar, inspirational manner and sing-song tones. The services began at 11 a. m. and continued until 2 p. m. Accepting an invitation from Andrew Mann, a young man of my age, I accompanied him to his father's house nearby for dinner and found all the preachers there. Well do I remember, when Mrs. Mann called dinner that Elder Joseph Parker went out to his buggy and brought in a bottle of whisky and set it on the table. After grace had been said by him, he passed the bottle around, as iced tea would now

be passed, that is, without excuse, and with as little harm, as none drank to excess.

At "early candle lighting" we were again in the service to hear more about "election, foreknowledge, foreordination and decrees," most of which was new to me, as they preached it. As in the morning, so in the evening, all three preachers took their turn, discussing these great questions, and kept us until about 11 o'clock. Having led the singing again at the evening service, which had warmed me up to good singing tune, I started home alone, across the prairie ridges and valleys, and went singing in my then, strong, clear voice, making the echoes ring up and down the Blue Creek hills and dales. As I entered the narrow valley of Blue Creek, I noticed quite a number of horses that appeared to be equi-distant, grazing; but I went on singing and passed through hackberry thicket that bordered the west side of the creek, going across and up the eastern ridges, singing all the way. Reaching father's house at about 1:30 a. m. and seeing lights burning, I feared that someone was sick, so hastened in, finding my mother in hysterics, saying: "They have got him, they have got him, I know they have killed Johnny, or he would have been back long ago."

Rushing in I said, "Here I am, mother, nothing has

hurt me." Father asked if I had seen any Indians on Blue Creek, I had not and told him so.

He said reports had been scattered over the settlement that a bunch of Indians were in camp at the trail crossing on Blue Creek, and the men were then making ready to start over there at daylight, to drive them out and recapture the horses, if they had taken any. I had no gun, but went along to show them where I had seen the horses in the Blue Creek valley.

We found that many horses had been really "staked out" all over the little valley, and on the brush on either side of the dim trail, that I had traveled, their campfires were yet smouldering.

All that had guns, took up the trail in pursuit. I was real glad that I had no gun, and so returned to my school. The Indians had spared my life for which I was very grateful, and to this day I fully believe that on hearing me go by singing, that they decided that I had not discovered them, hence permitted me to pass unharmed. If my conclusions are correct, then singing as I passed along the lone trail, saved my life.

CHAPTER VI.

AMONG THE CHOCTAWS TWELVE YEARS LATER

In these special chapters from my autobiography, I am giving my "Experiences with Indians" of various tribes and times. In the following chapters, I will tell of my work among the full-blood Choctaws in the southeast part of the old Indian Territory, about 80 miles northeast of Paris, Texas, from April, 1884, to May, 1888.

I had received a call from Onsi-Tamaha (Eagle Town), but thought it best to first go and investigate, as to situation and environments, as I then had a family.

I went to Paris, Texas, on a train, where I was told I would find some "freighters" from the Eagle Town country, and could get transportation thereto with them. On arriving at Paris I found three Indian teamsters with their wagons, and five yoke of oxen to each wagon, all loading groceries at R. F. Scott's wholesale grocery. Addressing Mr. Scott, I told him that I wanted to go to Eagle Town, and for what purpose. He stated that the wagons were from that place, and that he would make it alright with the Indians for me to

go with them, and for me to not say a word to them, as they could not understand English, but to get on the wagon and place the freight so it would ride without damage, or fall off, which I did to the delight of the drivers, as they seemed to be getting a little wobbly in the knees. After finishing the loads, I went back to the rear of the store to get a drink of water, and there behind a partition I saw a barrel of whisky and some tin cups, like a water barrel at a picnic. Then I knew why the Indians were seen going back there so often. It was against the Federal laws to give or sell an Indian whisky, but Mr. Scott permitted them to "steal it," and for that reason he grew very rich off the Indians' trade.

I told Mr. Scott that I did not care to go with the Indians, as they seemed to be getting drunk. He assured me that it would be alright and safe for me to go on with them. I went to a market nearby and got such food supplies as I would need for a trip of four days, and with my packages took a seat on the hindmost wagon. Soon the drivers took up their long-lash whips, and gave the signal to go. All the drivers walking.

We passed out through the northeast part of town and after going some miles or so, the drivers stopped and began to parley about something. I could not tell by their actions, but they were objecting to me, so I

concluded to wait and see. They often pointed back to town, and shortly one of them started back to Paris, as I supposed, to get an officer to take me off the wagon, but I was determined to wait and see. After a while the Indian came back with a package, which he unwrapped, and first came to me, and offered me a full bottle of whisky. I smiled but shook my head. They all drank and proceeded on their way.

As the loaded teams made such slow progress, I climbed off my perch and began walking, and faster than the teams went. As I passed the foremost driver he grunted and pointing to the sun and to my watch. Thinking he wanted to know the time, and after looking at my watch, I said "Eleven." He held up both hands with fingers extended. I shook my head, and then holding up both hands as he had, and then holding up one finger. This he seemed to understand, and grunted, and nothing more passed between us, until we came into camp.

While they were unyoking their oxen I began to gather some dry sticks for a campfire, and brought a bucket of water from the nearby creek. They started the fire and put on the coffee-pot, and began to prepare to make bread. I got their attention, and pointed to my packages on the wagon, which I at once brought and from which we all ate at each meal-time as long as

my supplies lasted, they only making coffee. After that I ate of their ashy bread and dirty meat. Their coffee was always good.

The first night, when they began to make their pallets under the wagons, I crawled upon a wagon, and making a smooth place, was soon asleep. Sometime later I awoke at a noise and saw that one of the Indians had climbed up the side of the high wagon and was saying "Oncha, Oncha," and was offering me a quilt. I took it, thinking he had said "On James, on James," as I had told them my name. I afterward learned that "Oncha" was their word for quilt.

We were traveling the old military road that led from Little Rock, Arkansas, to Paris, Texas, and while we crossed several rivers and large creeks, I saw no bridges or boats, except the ferryboat on Red River.

All went fairly well, and we had been able to make ourselves understood by a sign language. About 4 p. m. the fourth day, we arrived at "Onsi-Tamaha" (Eagle Town) store, which with a few cabins was all of Onsi-Tamaha at that time which was located near the west bank of Mountain-Fork River.

Mr. Gardner, the Indian merchant, was an intelligent gentleman, and spoke good English. He was afterward elected "Holiso Choctaw Nation," (Secretary of State) which he held for four years, and was

then elected "Chief Chito," (Governor.) He manifested quite an interest in me, when he learned of my mission.

I asked him about crossing the river as I had found out that the man that I wanted to see first lived on the east side of the river.

Mr. Gardner told me, that while the river was wide, it was not very deep, if I made a certain half circle, keeping on the shoals, but was very deep straight across. Then I asked how I was to get across, and he said "Just like those three squaws did, who are pasing out there."

He advised me to go down to the river and watch the Indians cross, and to note the circle they made, and go that way, but further said that it would be better for me to wait until some Indians went across from this side and follow them. I went down to the river, and sure enough I saw Indians, women and men, coming across, holding bundles in their hands up out of the water, which was from waist to shoulder deep. The bundles were their clothes. Landing on my side they would soon enrobe themselves and without noticing or speaking to me, went on their way.

After while the same three women that I had seen pass the store and two men, came down the bank on my side, and prepared to cross over, as the other Indians had. Removing my outer garments and holding

them and my suit case out of the water, I followed close after the red-skins, for I wanted to be sure of keeping on the hidden shoals, in making the circle. The river was about 300 yards wide the way we crossed, and did not vary much in depth all the way across. As soon as I wrung the water out of my garments, and putting on dry ones, I was ready to make the last lap of my trip.

Soon after leaving the river bottom, I saw beside the road a large mulberry tree full of large ripe berries, and being very hungry, as I had not eaten anything since early morning, and then not much of the Indian grub, I unfolded my umbrella and shook into it—well, much more than the reader would think that I could eat at one time—a quart, half gallon, a gallon—well, I will not say for the reader might doubt my word, but more than I thought two hungry men could eat.

The next day I was taken and introduced to the County Judge, who was Ex-officio Superintendent of Schools, whose English name was James Hudson, (most all Indians had an English as well as their Choctaw names.) Mr. Hudson was quite intelligent, and could talk some broken English. I spent several days with him at his home, and going around over the community of scattering huts, hidden away off the

MRS. FANNIE HOWELL, NEE FULSOM

An Indian Princess, and Daughter of Chief Fulsom

roads, in the thick tall timber, very similar to what old East Texas was many years ago.

After a while the Judge gave me much encouragement, and insisted that I take the work, which was the superintendency of the "Stock Bridge Academy," (?) an Indian school located six miles west of the line of Arkansas between Eagle Town and Ultima Thule. A school of 63, Indian children of all ages from 8 to 21, and only a few of them able to speak or understand English, but I seemed to have reached the place and work, the craving of my soul for fourteen years, ever since the day I talked with the chief at Coal Creek, Indian Territory, in November, 1869, when I was a small boy of 17, past, as is recorded in chapters one and two of these stories. The school house was built of long pine logs, 24 by 36 feet, with a large shed extension, intended for school purposes in good weather. The building was located on a elevation, surrounded by large trees of pine, black-oak, hickory with heavy undergrowth of holly, sweet-gum and dog-wood on the north and east, and a bold living spring of crystal cold water, bubbling out over a sweet-gum curb, about 100 yards to the west.

A Mr. John Austin had preceded me at that place, and having taught (?) for 14 years in succession. He had been raised among the Indians, and could speak

their language, so he did not insist on his pupils learning the English language. Hence the wish of the trustees, to get a teacher (Haliso-Pesicha) who could not speak Choctaw, and who in learning to speak the Choctaw tongue would enable the children to speak and understand the English equivalents to their native speech.

Finding this condition, I planned to change the program, I set a day to begin and called a mass meeting of all the people (parents and non-parents) on that day, and spoke to them, through an interpreter, in which I prophesied coming conditions, and a change in their then present form of government, which actually occurred about ten years later, when statehood was granted to Oklahoma. I also told them the great need of an English education, and advised the older people to learn to speak the English language, from their children, as they were being taught in the school. Judge Hudson made a strong appeal in Choctaw, advising them to remember and practice all that I had said. A native Presbyterian minister, by the name of James Dyer, spoke in both languages. He would speak a while in Choctaw, and then repeat in English, so I would know what was being said. This gave me the start and support, that I felt I so much needed.

I was delighted with the work. Speaking every

JOHN JAMES
The Teacher
Alvarado, Texas

Sunday to large crowds of people, through an interpreter, and teaching the children through the week. I adopted the picture method for all nouns, and the action method for all verbs and adverbs, as far as possible. In teaching Geography, I took the entire school to the spring branch, where there was a wide, sandy bed, over which shallow water flowed, and there I had them form mountains and hills, rivers, seas, capes, bays, oceans, peninsulas and straits, and also would make excursions into the forests, naming the different birds, and animals we might see, both tame and wild. This was real play, and all delighted in it and I had no trouble in getting the children to attend regularly.

On each Friday afternoon, I taught them to sing English songs and notes, having procured 50 copies of that small Sunday School book, "New Life." To this also, the children took most heartily, and it soon became a custom for the parents and others to attend every Friday, to hear the children sing, the strange English notes and songs, as we do at our reunions every year.

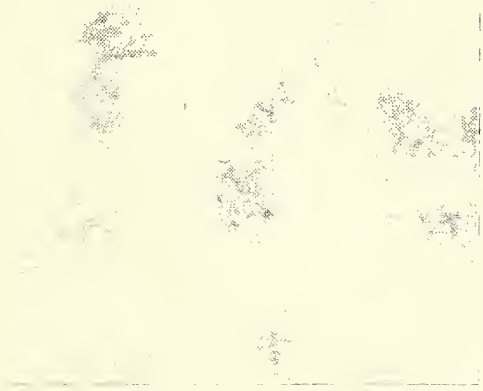
We had just a splendid time, and I soon learned to love the Indian character, which I found so different from the teachings of our books.

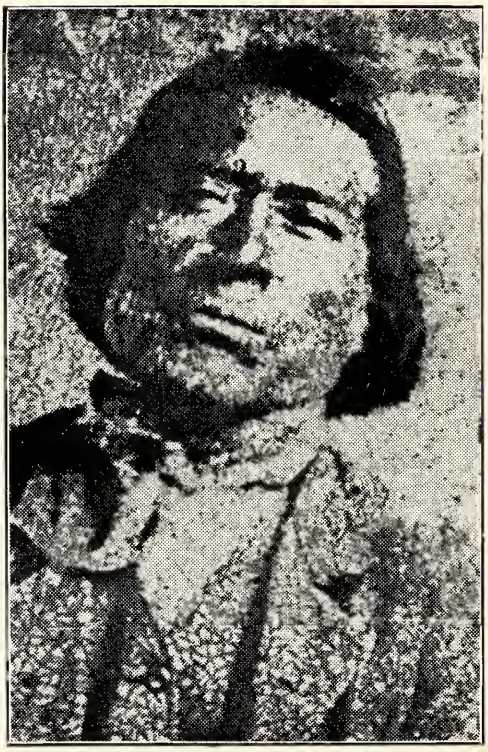
The Indian in his native realm, is not treacherous at all, but the reverse. They are naturally kind and

true, as well as charitable, to all whom they believe to be "Achukama" (good). No one can have a better friend than an Indian when he likes you. Most of the adults were Christians and faithful to their profession, and should one of their members turn back to worldliness, they speak of him, not as having "fallen from grace," but say of him, "He has quit praying." Can the reader improve on that?

Yes, I was delighted with my work. Had no smart Alecks to criticise and cause dissatisfaction and trouble. I had everything my own way, with full and hearty support of all the people, both old and young.

I secured a Choctaw lexicon, song book, and Bible, and soon learned to read and speak their language, and can do so to this day, 37 years since.





JAMES WALL

A Good Old Indian, and My School Trustee

Chapter VII.

FISHES AND HUNTS WITH THE INDIANS

I found it both pleasant and profitable to myself and the work to be sociable, and take a lively interest in all their public gatherings, the peculiarities of which were very interesting, and really fascinating. I went hunting with them and observed that they never killed more game than was necessary for present needs. Two deer might be found standing together, a buck and a doe, they shot the buck and let the doe live, though they sometimes had to chase her away from her mate, and had there been a dozen deer, the Indian would kill but one of them, sparing the rest for another Indian, or another time. So with smaller game. Fifty squirrels might be in the top of one tree, they would kill only enough for one meal, and go to camp. So with fishing, which was really the most enjoyable gathering they had in a social way, as squaws and children were taken —not to a "fish fry" but to a "fish roast," conducted on this wise. Fish berries were procured at a store, and a wagon would be loaded with their light canoes; then all would gather at an appointed place on the river; from fifty to a hundred of them, and while the

men got their canoes into the water, and sow fish berries over the water, as a farmer sows his grain, the squaws and children built a large brush fire near the bank.

Soon the fish became intoxicated on the berries, and rose to the surface flopping and wiggling around, and here is where the fun came in. All men who had canoes, were watching for the fish to rise, and when one came up, the men would make a race, to see who could get that fish. Often many fish came up at the same time, so it was dart here and there with their canoes, and catch the fish with their hands before they got over the spell caused by eating the berries, and sank again. When a fish was caught it was thrown upon the bank, and here the Indian girls and women had a tussle, seeing who could catch and put into the bank of live coals, the most fish alive and wiggling. Yes, for that is the way they cooked them, just as they were caught out of the water. When they are thus roasted, the skin and scales are peeled off as we shuck an ear of corn. The meat is then flaked off the carcass, the carcass and its contents is then thrown aside. You have never tasted good fish, unless you have eaten some, that was cooked in this manner. They took only the larger fish out of the water, leaving the smaller to grow for the next "fish roast."

THE TWELVE CHOCTAW SENATORS

The First Senate After the Choctaws Settled in the Indian Territory in 1832

Permit me to say here, that no Indian would partake of a morsel of food that he had secured, either by fishing or hunting either alone or in a crowd, without first expressing his simple thanks for the food, and asking the blessings of the Great Spirit upon it.

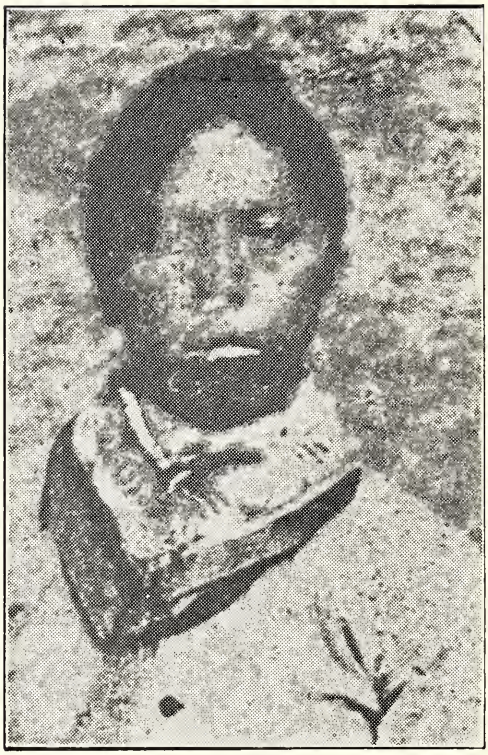
I have traveled alone with them on the lone mountain trails; slept with them around their camp fires; visited their sick and dying; attended their peculiar funerals—"Choctaw Cries"—and regularly attended their quarterly meetings, where they gathered by thousands, from far and near. I have observed them closely. They were an interesting study, for I found them so very different, from what our school books and histories, had led me to believe about them. They were certainly the most trustworthy people I had ever known.

While the Choctaws and the rest of the five civilized nations, had a form of civil government, with county and state (tribunal) officials, yet they soon placed so much confidence in their "Hollisso Pechicha" (Missionary Teacher) that they brought all their troubles and misunderstandings to me, for settlement, and whatever decision I made, that ended it, for whatever I said was "law and gospel" with them; the court of last resort, and to which, they all most obediently submitted.

What an opportunity for doing good! I fully realized it, and did my very best. If such conditions does not bring out the very best that is in a man, there is nothing worthy in him. For four years, this good work went on and I was satisfied, except my own children needed better surroundings, and that was the only thing that placed a question mark across my future plans. Then came the death of Captain Jackson Bradley, in August, 1887, which left a small interest in his estate, to my four oldest children, and for their good, I resigned my position and work, in April, 1888, and returned to Mountain Creek here in Johnson County, Texas, in May of that year.

In these chapters (this story was first published as a serial, in the Alvarado Bulletin, and so pleased its many readers, that I was urged to put it in book form). I am giving the better side of the Indian character and life, as all former, truthful biographical stories, of our frontiersmen, that I have been writing for the readers of the Alvarado Bulletin, have given accounts of the savagery and cruelty of the wild Indians, especially the Comanche tribe. Perhaps all others have done the same, all along the line of frontiersmen, as the whites pushed their settlements on westward, all over the United States. When we remember that the Indian was the weaker, as well as the original possessor of this

country, then some excuse can be justly accorded them, as they realized that they were being driven from their own homes and hunting grounds, as was given to them by the Great Spirit. Therefore, the spirit of revenge, and a determination to hold their own beloved lands, drove them, as it would any other people, to do many things, even contrary to their former naturally peaceful dispositions.



NANCY DYER
A Typical Choctaw Squaw

Chapter VIII

THE CUSTOMS OF THE YOUNG INDIANS IN COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Since these articles about the Indians began to be printed in the Alvarado Bulletin, I have often been asked by our young people, to tell them about the young Indian people—their dress, company keeping and getting married. So briefly, I will say, that their dress was plain, made of cheap goods, with bright colors, well matched; in the female attire, and that jewelry, beads and ribbons were worn more by the young men—bright ribbons flowing from their hats, and arms, and rings made of bone, shell, copper, brass, silver and gold, of their own making so you note, that while with us the young ladies dress to attract the opposite sex, while with the Indians it was the young men who sought to attract. With them, it would have been thought the heighth of indecency, for a girl to seek to attract the attention of young men, and is this not also the custom of nature. Is not the most attractive fowl in the barn yard the male? And the most attractive animal in the herd, also the male?

With them the young girls and young men were

very timid in each others' presence, so the boys and girls did not keep company and court, as white young people do.

When a young Indian decided to find a mate, he became unsocial, and avoided the crowds. When this was noticed, he was spoken of, with a word, when translated, means "Pining for a mate". He would go into the forest and select for himself, a place where a field could be cleared off, and there he would build a hut, and then quietly pass around where he knew young marriageable girls lived. They understood his actions. No words were spoken. If any of the girls seen, were also pining for a mate, she would look at him, and afterwards make inquiries as to where he had built his cabin. If she suited him not, he passed on, until he found one, to whom he seemed to be drawn, as the mate his soul craved. Then he would pass that way often, and if she wanted him she would look at him when he passed. (No, girls, she did not wink or nod, for love has a language, all its own, and is recognized easily, by the one, and that without the utterance of a single word).

When he became fully decided (no haste, mind you), to seek her in holy wedlock (I did not say marriage), he would go to a certain kind of weed, called in English "the charm weed" at the hour of midnight, when

the moon was full, and did not cast a shadow, either to the right or left, and with his back to the north star, he knelt before the charm weed, and looking up to the Great Spirit, he would ask that the certain girl be given to him for a mate, and if it was to be so, the weed would nod to him. If it did not do so, he would come again the next night at midnight, and the third night also, and if it did not then nod, he would wait until the next full moon, and then repeat his request and so on until the weed did bow to him (or he thought it did). Then with haste he plucked up the weed and went to the hut where his desired one slept. Peeping through the cracks of the cabin, and by the light of the full moon, he could locate the pallet, on which his desired one lay sleeping. Then he would silently slip in and place the charm weed in her bed, across her breast.

On awaking, and finding the charm weed, she became bewitched and pined for him, and at once began making preparations for housekeeping in his hut. In the meantime he had made a couch in his cabin, and was living there. On the next full moon, and at the hour of midnight, she would arise, take her bundle of all she had, and go to his cabin alone. He, believing so strongly, in the magic effects of the charm weed, was really expecting her. When his dog announced her

coming, he arose and going to his cabin door, and seeing her, took her into his arms, and with that first embrace, their vows were solemnly plighted, and rarely ever broken. They were truly man and wife, or mates, as much so as if a thousand priests and ceremonies had been used. Nature's children, following nature's laws, in perfect obedience to Him, who had created them. Would I favor such customs for white people, No! For I fear that they are not pure enough to respect, that high, holy and primeval method of wedlock (I waive the weed part of it).

Missionaries had introduced the marriage ceremony, and many, but not all had afterward submitted to it, but some of the happiest unions of man and wife, that came under my observation, were those whose sacred vows of wedlock were made in the presence of the Great Spirit alone. To them, the minister's part was superfluous; neither did it add anything to the sacredness of the mating, or to their happiness afterward. It was the white man's law that they did not need, and did not accept, fully, until their country was made into the State of Oklahoma. ("Red Man"—Okla., People and Homa—Red).

With the Indians, perfect chastity was the rule, not the exception. The rule was respected by the man, and he killed his wife, if she broke it; and public sen-

timent approved his act. Unfaithfulness was an unpardonable sin.

The women were not faithful, through fear, but because of their high regard for the sanctity of the home, so there was never any jealousy observed among them. Like Sarah, Rebecca and the mother of Samuel, of Bible story, the wife prayed for motherhood, and nature blessed her, without much suffering or risk. Her life was spent in loving and caring for her children, and in loving and obeying her husband and lord. They had but little, and were satisfied with their "daily bread." They trusted nature, and lived close to her laws.

Now, white man's civilization, is forcing them away from their ancient customs, without making them any happier. The new customs of life, and mode of living, are decimating their population, and until they become immune to the evil effects of the new manner of life, they will continue to die with diseases, they did not, and would not have had, under their former manner of life, and diet and out-door freedom.

The Old Indian's Lament

The reader will remember, that in a former chapter, I referred to Judge Hudson, an Indian gentleman of intelligence. I often sought his congenial companion-

ship. One day we were out hunting, and talked of the Indian's past condition, and future prospects. He was proud of the past, but skeptical of the future, to which his people seemed to be doomed. Speaking of their health and physical condition, he said, "Young Indian, he no good any more. He weak. He no brave. Now he go hunting. He come to river. He swim across. He make fire. He warm, but he get sick. He has heap high fever. He cough. He dies. He no good. Old Indian, he brave. He go hunting. He swim river. He makes no fire. He go on. He no get sick. He no get tired. He heap good man. Heap brave! Young squaws, he no good either. He go off to school. He marry. He get sick, heap sick. He stay in house. He send for doctor. Papoose, he cry like white baby. He no good. School squaws, he no good. He wear clothes, heap to many and heap too tight. He no make Indian heap good wife. He no good."

Chapter IX

THE INDIAN'S RELIGION

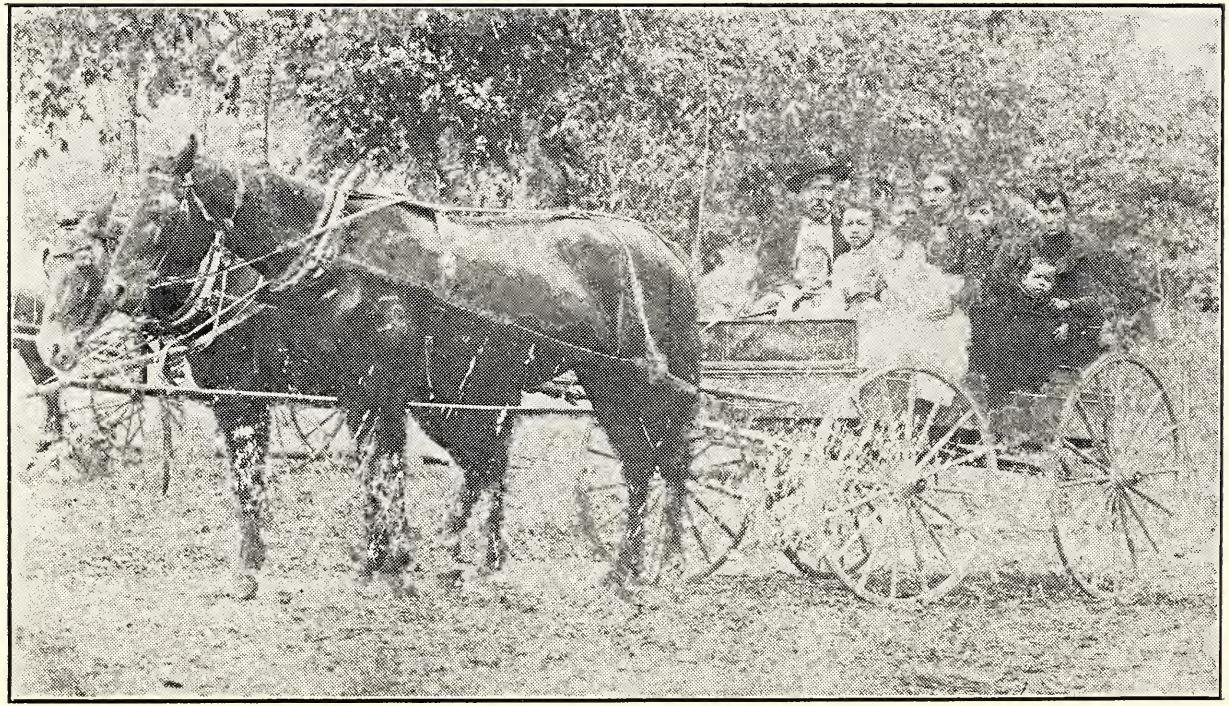
I will treat this subject, under two heads: First, their original, primitive religion; then their new, or Christion religion.

With all due respect and reverence for all forms of religion; even the idolatry of the ancients, wherein the people earnestly sought to know their Creator, and worship Him; I claim for the North American Indian, the purest religion, and the loftiest conceptions of the great Creator, of any non-christian religion that has ever been known to this old world.

All the so-called heathen religions, as that of Chaldea, Egypt, India, Scandinavia, etc., had conceptions of Deity, that they represented by the sun, the moon, stars, animals, reptiles, birds, beetles, etc., and formed idols of wood, stone, copper, brass, silver and gold; before which they offered sacrifices through priests. The North American Indian had no priests, no idol, or sacrifices, but went direct to the Great Spirit and worshipped Him who was invisible, and seeing Him by faith, adored Him who seeketh such to worship Him in spirit and in truth, who is a Spirit, and planted a similar spirit in his creatures, that there might be communion between the two.

The Choctaw conception of Deity is seen in the words with which he begins his prayers, to-wit: "Chilombish Chito, Holitopa Ma"—(Thou Great and Holy Spirit). We ask where did he get so great and perfect conception of Deity? Their lengends and traditions answereth not. Where did old Job, whose religion was 100 per cent Double A-1. Where did he get it? The Bible and traditions answereth not. Such conceptions and a religion founded thereon are not the product of human intellect, alone. The philosophies of Greece and Rome, or that of any other people, never discovered nor invented so pure and holy conceptions of Deity, nor worshipped Him with a purer emotion of soul. Remember that I said that the Indian had no priest and no sacrifice.

The one implies the other. The myth, and myth it must be, of the Senecas and other like tribes, offering a fair maiden, at the time of the harvest moon, by building a raft, and binding her on it, they set it afloat, on the Niagara River, to go over the falls to certain destruction, as a sacrifice to the Great Spirit, for their bountiful harvests, is an exact copy of the legends of the ancient Egyptians, who, as the traditions have it, by binding a chosen fairest maiden on a raft, and sending it down the Nile, to be swallowed up in the waves of the great sea—even recounting that many of



REV. JAMES A. DYER

A Full Blood, and His Family, Going to Church

their fair maidens so anxious to be chosen for the sacrifice, would come in great numbers, and had to be selected by lot. All that fits into Egyptian legend, but does not fit into the religion of the American Indian. I have discussed this subject with many old Indians, and am fully persuaded, that I have a correct knowledge of their original religion, which I have mentioned above. It did not make any of them perfect. All sinned. Some more than others. Every one knew that he had an inclination to sin, while he knew it was better to do right. They had a conscious knowledge of right and wrong. Then why send missionaries to a people, who had so great a religion? Missionaries all had to face that question. There is but one answer. The Great Spirit—Jehovah, had sent his beloved Son, into the world, to redeem mankind from the penalties and effects of sin, everywhere seen and acknowledged; and having done so, it was His will; so revealed in His word, that all men should know of His great love for them, that they might know and trust His Son for forgiveness, redemption and eternal salvation; and He made it so easy to do so that every one that has so trusted Christ, has a great desire to send the glad tidings of so glorious a gospel, "to earth's remotest bounds," and all who have accepted it, declare it to be better than their other religion. Then why not let

the American Indians have it also. He does not, as other religionists have to give up his worship to the Great Spirit, but only to add the doctrine and belief in the Christ also, through whom, and in whose merits he approaches, acceptably, the Great Spirit. Also, because of the Indian's mistaken ideas of redemption and atonement. He believes that sin had to be atoned for, and that if he had committed a crime, as murder, etc., that by giving up his own life, it atoned for his crime. Life for life, was his idea, and it was so nearly correct. But it was the life of the Perfect One, not the sinner, that atoned for sins. Not for the one only, but for the sins of the whole world. Their views and practice of their former religion, is set forth in the following truthful narrative. An old Indian whose English name was Amos, became so angered at his grown daughter, that he killed her. As his anger subsided, he saw the enormity of his deed. According to his faith, he could atone for his great sin, by giving up his own life. He went to Judge Hudson and demanded trial and conviction with the penalty of being shot dead. He was tried and sentenced to death, and a day came and did the shooting. Old man Amos, came to own son, the sheriff from Nashoba (Wolf) County set three moons ahead for execution, and by the request of the high sheriff of that county, who was his

the appointed place, sad and silent, notwithstanding the Judge turned him loose, until the day of execution. Willingly he was bound with a rope at each wrist and two Indians held his arms apart, after he had taken ochre (a colored chalky rock) and pushing his shirt back, made a circle over his heart, then was seated on his blanket, facing the executioner, who knelt about ten steps in front of him, and fired. The poor old man fell back dead, with a bullet hole through the center of the circle.

Following the discussion, we now come to their new religion. I said in a preceding chapter that the Indian was naturally religious. I will now tell of their "Quarterly Meetings" and the part I took in them. Be it said to their praise, that they had no cuss words, in all their vocabulary. When an Indian wanted to "cuss" he had to use the white man's ugly cuss words.

He has many beautiful words for the praise and adoration of the Great Spirit, but not a word with which he may cuss his fellow man. The worst word, or epithet they use is "Chim ofilusa okpullo" which means "you are a mean, black, dirty dog," and a further meaning is "that you have a disposition to get more than your share." Let the reader reflect and make his application among a supposed better people. The Choctaw people were fully 75 per cent Christians and

very faithful to their new religion. One of their big camp grounds was located about two miles from my school, back in a dense forest. A large tree was made the center, just in front of which was placed the "sacred desk," for the minister. A circle one hundred feet across, was designated by a series of stumps, where large trees had been cut off about five feet high, on which was placed the torches, which was made of "rich pine." This was the "Holy circle." And another circle was designated, about 300 feet out from the center, by blazes on trees around the circle, and other high stumps were used for torches and when all these torches were lit up after sundown, they gave ample light for all the grounds and the camps, which was located outside this outer circle. All inside this outer circle, was "Holy" grounds, and no stock or vehicles were permitted inside thereof. To this place, the Indians came every "quarter" for their "big meetings," which would begin on Friday night. At this time the high sheriff of the county addressed the people, instructing them in the laws, and the punishment for the violations of the same; especially would he dwell on the Federal laws, and the severity of the Federal courts, and the fatal results that usually followed to those who were incarcerated in the Federal prisons. He exhorted the young men, to be very careful of their con-

duct and to respect all the laws, both tribunal and Federal. A Bible lesson was read and several persons were asked to lead in public prayer. At 10 a. m. Saturday, they would gather again, at the blowing of a conch shell, and a sermon would be preached, followed with songs, prayers and talks by laymen, until the dinner hour. Again at 3 p. m. and at "torch lighting" similar services were held. A "sun rise" prayer service would be held each morning. On Sunday the services were the same as the day previous, except at the 3 p. m. hour, I was asked to take the services; as many white people, from over the line from Arkansas came to these meetings on Sunday, also many negroes from the river plantations. These negros retained the old-fashioned brogue of English they used before emancipation, and could also talk the Choctaw with a similar brogue.

In my part of the services, I would read a Bible lesson in English, then my interpreter would read the same lesson from his Choctaw Bible. After prayer was offered in English, it was followed by a Choctaw in his language. Then a song, each verse, first in English, and repeated in Choctaw, as follows:

"Show pity, Lord, O Lord forgive; Let a repenting rebel live.
Are not they mercies large and free: May not a sinner trust in Thee."

Then the Choctaw people, all singing, would take it up thus:

"Yoshoba ya, I nukahaklot: Isht I hak kashofi pulla na.
Chiyoshoba Ilbusha yut: Ikcha yashfla Chihoya ma, hoke."

Before me sat a thousand or more Indians, all sitting flat down on the leaves, and pine straw, and off to the left, sat fifty to one hundred negroes, in like manner, and to my right stood from fifty to one hundred white people. I would speak a sentence in English, then stop; while the interpreter repeated in Choctaw, what I had said. Thus I went through my address. The Indians would listen, in their characteristic quiet, sedate and unexpressive manner. The negroes would begin to warm up, and swaying their bodies, to and fro, would fervently groan out their approval, and the white people would often speak out their hearty "amens." To this day, more than a third of a century since, it is a delight to cherish the pleasant memories of those "big meetings."

Following this service, I would call up my school children, to sing for the people. I led them, first singing by note, then by the English words, similar to our old-time singing at our reunions here at Alvarado, every year.

The negroes herein mentioned, were the descendants

of the slaves, that the wealthy Indians had brought from Alabama, when they moved to the Indian Territory in 1830. The U. S. Government had purchased their lands in the states, paying them in negroes, cattle and horses, as "boot" in the deal, or exchange for their lands, for the new lands assigned them, in the southeast part of the old Indian Territory, of about one hundred miles square, and afterward known as the Choctaw Nation, which was composed of several minor tribes.

When the treaty was consummated at Rabbit Creek, Ala., in which this exchange and removal was agreed to, the U. S. Commissioners promised the Indians that their new lands, were to be theirs forever, an old Indian chief objected, saying "the white man's forever, does not always mean forever, and mentioned many instances, where the white man's government had changed the treaties, made with them, and insisted that where the word forever was used in the treaty, that it should read, "as long as grass grows and water runs."

Grass continues to grow and water to run, but nine-tenths of all their lands, by all manner of scheming has been taken away from the Indians, as was their greatest wealth—their slaves, which left "poor lo" a class of very poor people. Now conditions have changed considerably, and many of the Indians are wealthy, but

their old customs, that I have been narrating in these pages, have almost ceased to exist, and the good old-time "big meetings" are no more. At the big meetings mentioned above, the negros would bring their lunch, but the white people would be asked to eat with the Indians, which invitation they readily accepted, and partook greedily, of their Indian stewed meats, good coffee and tongfulla. "Tongfulla" was a kind of corn pone bread, cooked in a deep, large oven or skillet. The meal was beaten in a mortar, and seasoned with the kernels of walnuts, hickory nuts, goobers, beans and peas, and believe me, it was good.

On Sunday evening, they had a great service, and was extended late in the night, but no emotion, that is, none visible, but evidently suppressed, by a very strong effort, and the feeling of devotion was so strong, that every one present, became conscious of it. The spirit was evidently quenched, which was contrary to a scriptural injunction, but it was the Indian's nature, to suffer torture, or joys, without manifesting any outward evidence.

After their early service, the next morning, all took up their camp equippage, and silently returned to their homes.

With this I close my "Indian Experiences" I have herein narrated only a part of them. I truly thank so

many of my patient readers, for their expressed appreciation of my story, and as so many have asked for it in book form; should I bring out the book, I will include much more of the strange doings of the Indian people, and will give many of their pictures.

Again, I thank you.

CHAPTER X

THE LITTLE WHITE PAPOOSE

When I closed "My Experience With Indians" a few weeks ago, I thought I had written enough and might appear to some, as monopolizing space and time, but so many interested readers have requested more of the Indian stories, and even the kind editor of the Bulletin has requested, that I meet the urgent demand. So I will write a few more articles, in which my most thrilling experiences will be narrated. It was while I was principal of Stock Brudge Academy, that the stork came to my home. My son George, who now lives a few miles west of Alvarado, 37 years of age, and has a wife and four children, was born there, March 11, 1888. News of the advent of the white papoose soon spread over the settlement, and the school girls and smaller boys were so anxious to see the little wonder, that I gave my consent, for them to go to my house to see him. In doing so, they would have to see the little white hands and feet, and take them into their hands. They chattered in their Indian baby talk to him. The squaws also, old and young, were as anxious to see the little fellow, as were the children. They would examine every particle of his apparel, and

closely scrutinize the make-up of all the other things that Mrs. James had prepared for him. It was all so different to their customs of keeping their little papoose wrapped in a shawl or blanket until they were several months old. They would call him "Ula nockina Chorge isketina." (Little boy baby George).

The coming of little George to our home was quite a sensation to all our female neighbors. It seemed so strange to them, that the stork would come to our home at night, for the stork is no night bird, among the full-blood Choctaws. With them he is also a migratory bird, leaving in the fall, and not returning until spring time. The negro stork, down on the river plantations, liked the climate, and remained there all the year.

It became my expected duty, to accompany the stork, to several of the Indian huts, but more often to the cool shade, down by the spring branch. After the stork took his flight, I was always asked to give the little papoose a name, and to kneel down by his side and pray the Great Spirit to bless its little life. This always pleased the mother, and about sundown she would take up her little one and go to her cabin.

Sometimes the stork and I alone, were all that were present, on these occasions, and I heard of instances when the stork alone was present, and all went well.

Chapter XI

EATING SNAKES—OR THEIR MANNER OF PROVIDING FOOD

The Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage once said, that "the only reason he took a text, was to have a peg to hang his hat on." For a similar reason, I have given this article, the above caption; however, the Indians did occasionally eat snakes, and I ate one with them, after I had seen it nicely dressed, and then roasted brown, over live coals. (More of which will be told in a later article). The speeches of Indians which I have had printed, during the last several issues of the Bulletin, have given the careful reader, quite an insight to the Indian ideals (see the appendix) and former conditions, when our forefathers who were in fact, trespassers, came to America.

The people among whom I lived four years, were not far removed, in their manner of life, from those found here, three and four hundred years ago.

Having been driven back, and farther back, they finally chose the hills, mountains and deep forests, with many rivers, in the southeast corner of the old Indian Territory. There they found an abundance of game of all kinds, and fish innumerable, which abundantly met

their needs for food, and as stated in a former article. They lived close to nature, and depended largely on the natural productions of the forest and rivers for food. They conserved, and wasted not, either the fish or food animals, large or small. No such thing as killing game for sport. They killed only just what they needed, and as their hunger demanded.

White man came over from Texas, and out of Arkansas and needlessly slaughtered large quantities of their big game. The white men saw only the fun, and success of their hunt, but the Indian saw the waste and robbery by their inconsiderate acts. Truly it was as much a crime, to thus steal the Indian's food supply, as it is to go into a cow man's pasture and kill his beeves, hogs, sheep, turkeys and chickens. The only difference in the latter it is personal property, while in the former, it was property held in common by all the Choctaws—deeded to them by the U. S. Government. (What, deed back to the Indians, that which was already and rightfully theirs?) and they held all those lands, and everything thereon in common, and their territorial lines were as legal boundaries, as a fence around a man's farm or ranch.

The white man disregarded those sacred rights, and thereby stole away so much of the Indian's food supply, that they were forced to clear up small fields, and

raise corn, potatoes, beans, etc., to keep them from starving, and some cotton, with which to purchase clothing, as their deer, bear, beaver, fox and other fur-bearing animals had been killed by the above mentioned trespassers.

The Indian, did not like to thus be robbed, but they bore it, rather than have trouble with the white man's government; whose courts never rendered justice to the poor Indian, as they viewed it.

Thus war forced the unaccustomed method of procuring an artificial supply of food. They being naturally improvident, having been accustomed to live "from hand to mouth," they often failed to make and save enough, of the things they had grown, as well as wild berries, grapes, fruits and nuts, to last them through the winter seasons; at which time they had to subsist so entirely on wild meats, and fish, and not having enough of bread and dried nuts, to go with it, they became surfeited on the meat diet and hungered for bread or nuts.

This period was most severe in the late winter and early spring, until berries began to ripen, and it was called "Impa exsho" time, i. e., a time when they had nothing to eat. They would dig and eat certain roots, of which the hickory was best, being almost as brittle as radishes, and they would take bark from the slippery

elm trees, which some of us "old staters" know is edible. At this "Impa exsho" time, they craved bread so much, that some of them would come and stand under the trees, in front of my door, and appeared so weak, that we would take bread to the door and give it to them. Mrs. James kept quite a supply of nice loaf bread on hand, for that purpose, and the poor Indians would soon show their gratitude by bringing a venison ham, or some nice large fish to us. Truly the Indian "never forgets a favor."

In certain seasons, wild game would get scarce, and it was at such times they would eat snakes—and snakes were never scarce. Surely snakes are no more forbidden (see Leviticus. Ch. 11) or filthy, than the hog, which we all eat. (Jews excepted).

The snake is killed, and at once its head is cut off, with a few inches of its neck, then skinned and dressed; and impaled on sharp sticks, over a bed of hot coals, until it is roasted nicely brown. It is then juicy, nutritious and has a pleasant flavor, and in comparison, would say it resembles a chicken or turkey's neck, thus cooked. So dear reader, do not be shocked at the thought of eating snakes, and then go to the table and partake of a filthy dead hog.

A Strange Witch—Chapter XI

Chapter XII

THE STRANGE OLD WITCH

She was called "old Nancy" by the negroes on the river plantations, who were in mortal fear of her. The Indians called her "Ahalhkunna" (witch). No one knew her real name, race or age. She lived in a dirt-floor cabin in the "flats" between the river lands where the negroes lived, and the hill country where the Indians lived. The oldest Indians said that she was there when they came from Alabama in 1830; a grown woman, claiming to be able to tell fortunes, and bewitch animals, and that she could then speak their langauge. I went there in the spring of 1884, so she must have been at least 75 years old then. I never saw her, except at a distance. She walked with a long stout stick. The Indians and negroes believed that she could talk in all languages, even in animal and bird languages and could bewitch animals and birds, and make them come into her hands. This, they said, she had often done, as well as bewitch people.

In Huckleberry time (May) she gathered the berries, and brought them to my house and sold them to Mrs. James; but was careful to come, when she knew I was away; for I defied her powers as a witch. When the

Indians told me that she was a witch, and of some of her doings, in order to weaken their belief in her, I told them to tell her that I said "she was a devil" and that I dared her to bewitch me. It astonished the Indians that I would risk so much, but they told her what I said; so she always avoided me.

I often saw her at distances, but before I could get within 100 yards of her, she would dodge out into the woods and hide.

An Indian mob from Nashaba (Wolf) County—about 30 miles north, had at two different times, come down and tried to burn her up. They had spies to watch her cabin, and when they knew the she was in it at night, they would slyly, carry rich pine and dry wood, piling it up at the only door, set it afire, thinking that she would surely burn, with the hut. In a month or so, she would be found in another place in the thick woods, occupying a new cabin. This the more convinced the Indians that she must be, all that she claimed to be.

Some Indians came one day to get me to go with them to see her and talk with her, and then tell them what I thought of her. We went, but found that she was not there, i. e., not in the hut. I examined it, first for a secret underground passage way out, finding none, I then examined the low roof, and discovered in a

corner, a small section of the room, that could be moved to one side just under a low hanging elm limb. This I showed to the Indians, and explained how, in case of fire, she could climb out, and escape into the thick brush.

She made her living by selling wild berries, fruits and nuts, in their seasons and by trapping beaver, at several "dams" in a nearby lake.

She had no gun, claiming that she did not need one, as she could charm squirrels, rabbits and birds, and make them come into her hands; which she had often done in the presence of negroes and Indians; which act greatly mystified them, making them believe that in reality, she was a witch.

I told the Indians that she had some pets, that she had trained to thus do, and asked them, if she did not always turn them loose after feeding them, and they answered "Omeh." (Yes). Then I asked them to get her to go to their homes, and see if she could charm the animals and birds there, and see if they would come to her, when she called. She refused to go, saying "that was some of Holisso's (myself) and that she would not do anything to please him."

She was not Indian; she was not negro, neither was she a white person, but from descriptions I had of her, she seemed to be a "duke's mixture" of all these races.

Mrs. James said that when she came to our house to sell her berries that she spoke fairly good English, but acted so very strange, that she was afraid of her.

Quite often, I would hear of some strange things, she had done. On one occasion, I had the result of her witchery (?) so plainly occur in my presence. It was of a young girl that had been suffering under the witch's influence for some time, so she could not dress a chicken or squirrel, without fainting at the sight of blood, also other peculiar actions. I was free to admit, that there was a strange effect, from some unknown cause. I argued with them, that the cause was not really, the powers of the witch, but in their belief in her powers, and to convince them, I used illustrations to explain my meaning. As thus, if they should hear from what they believed to be a perfectly reliable source. that a certain person (naming him) had been killed that day would they not be made sad and mourn, and have no appetite to eat, and be exceedingly grieved? They would say "Omeh" (yes). Then said I, if that person should return, alive in a week or so, would you not then be glad to rejoice? "Omeh" would be their reply. Then said I, it was not in the fact of his being dead, that made you all sad and mourn, for he was not dead, but the belief of the report, is what affected you, and made you so sad; so the cause was in your undoubt-

ing belief that he was dead, as he was not really dead; even so this very peculiar effect on this girl, has not been caused by that old witch, but the girl's undoubting belief that the old "Ahalhkunna" could, and had bewitched her. What does the reader think about it? Today, Dec. 20, 1920, I have read in the Dallas News, of a case in the court in New York, where several people charged a woman of being a witch. Huh, and white people do that? And what of it? When there are many people and some of them right here in Alvarado, who are so superstitious, that they will not proceed, if a rabbit crosses their path, in front of them. Some will not begin a piece of work on Friday, if they can not finish it before Sunday. Or begin preparations for a crop, or start on a journey on Friday, even ship sailings are dated on other days than Friday or the thirteenth day of a month. Not a street in the residence portion of any city that I am acquainted with is numbered "13", as the next after No. 12 is some "avenue." No engines on the railroads are numbered 13. No policeman's badge, with that "hoo do" number. So what have we, the educated white people to boast of, over the negroes and Indians? for believing no worse things.

I was in a bad railroad wreck, near Longview, Texas, in September, 1907, but fortunately, no one was seri-

ously hurt. After much of the excitement had died down, a fine, intelligent looking gentleman came back from the front, and said "no wonder, we have had a wreck, for the figures, in the number of the engine, when added, make 13." The number was "472". I wonder what awful calamity will yet befall this old world, during the remaining of this good year of 1921. Figures added make "13." The number "13," and the day "Friday" are all right, if we are.

Chapter XIII

MY GREATEST FRIGHT

I have often been asked, if I were not afraid of the Indians? And my answer has always been "No!" But really I did have some scares, for which the Indians were in no way responsible. The teacher's vouchers were cashed by the "Trustee Chito," an Indian by the name of McKinney who lived up in the mountains about fifty miles north of my school. Once on my return from his place, I stopped to stay all night with an Indian, that I knew. I was given a bed in a small side room that had one door which opened to the outside, and a small window opening up under the low roof, just above the foot of my bed and which had a wooden shutter. Some time in the night, the Indian came into my room and awakened me, saying, he had heard a noise and thought he saw two men standing near my window. I arose and when he went out, I pulled in the latch string from the outside, and moved my heavily loaded shotgun up against the head of my bed, and placing my revolver under my pillow, I again retired, not to sleep but to be ready for any intruder. The hut was in the thick woods and it was very dark. In about an hour I heard a noise, as the gently opening

of my window shutter. I quietly seized my revolver and waited for further developments. After some time I again heard a noise, as of some one pulling himself into my window. I could not see the window, but fired in that direction, and distinctly heard some one fall to the ground on the outside. I reached for my shotgun, cocked both barrels and sitting on the edge of my bed, waited, thus prepared for anything, but heard nothing more that night. When day began to dawn, I saw that my window really was open, and I looked out expecting to see some one dead, under it. Imagine my glad surprise, when I saw nothing, not even a sign of blood. Then looking at the window, I saw in the top facing, the hole my bullet had made. At the breakfast table that morning, the Indian said that he distinctly heard two persons run away from the window, after I shot. I told him that I was real glad that I had not killed any one. This remark surprised him, and he said that he feared that they would waylay me somewhere along the road, and advised that I leave the road, and go a trail that he would show me. This I did and saw nothing more of the robbers.

In vacation time during the summer months, and after my Sunday School and other services of a Sunday morning I would go over into Arkansas in the afternoons, to a Baptist church, about eight miles from my

place, and hold afternoon and night services there. I enjoyed those meetings very much, for the Arkansas people flocked to those meetings in great numbers, and sang! Oh my, how they did sing and pray, and pray and sing until they would get happy; then it was so easy to talk to a people thus spiritualized, about things divine. The night services would last until about 10 o'clock, after which I would ride home. On my way, and on the Indian side of the state line, stood a large pine tree, just off to the right of the road, called "Issish-upi-chito" (big blood tree).

I have herein before stated, that there was one sin, that was unpardonable by the Indian, and as they believed, by the Great Spirit also, and that was the destruction of the purity of the home. If the woman was to blame she was killed, but in case of "Ohoyo-hokoli," the woman was not to blame, then woe be unto that man, who had thus defiled the sanctity of that home; be he red, white or black. He was hunted down and shot full of arrows, or hot lead.

On one occasion, the object of such wrath, was a white man from out of Arkansas, and when the Indians overtook him near the state line, they killed him, and hewing off the side of a large pine tree, facing the road, they painted it thick with his blood, for a warning to

others. Hence the name of that tree and place, "Issish-upi-chito."

On returning from one of my Arkansas meetings on a very dark night, and having the same guns with me, herein above mentioned, which were very necessary for night travel, through those thick dark woods, on account of panthers and bear; which were very plentiful in that locality, as there was not a house in three miles of the place. As I approached the "Issish-upi-chito," very uncanny feelings began to creep over me, for I had seen that "big blood tree" many times, and it always looked ugly to me; to make it worse, my Choctaw pony, which had real good Indian sense, suddenly stopped, looked forward and became nervous. I looked, but could see nothing, and started on, but soon saw dimly, what appeared to be two objects in the road, about 30 steps ahead of me. I could not tell whether they were two men or two bears that had reared up to make fight, as that is the way they do when found at night. They either run off or rear up to dispute your passage. I cocked both barrels of my shotgun which lay across my saddle in front of me, and urged my pony forward, knowing, that if it were bear, I could kill both of them, on short range, and if they were men, it would do no good for me to turn back, as they could get me if they wanted me. If they were Indians, it

would not do to show the least bit of fear, as they detest a coward, and have the highest admiration for a brave man who is not afraid to die. A few steps closer and I saw they were men, standing in the road, with their guns resting on the ground, but could not tell whether they were white, red or black. My conscience was clear, and I knew that if it was any one who knew me, I had nothing to fear; otherwise I was a goner. I spurred my pony on, and as I approached, they each stepped back still holding their guns by the muzzle, and I rode between them and saw that they were Indians, but I could not recognize them. I said kindly "How-Do" and went on unmolested. But if my hair ever did stand on end, it did there and then. My nerves were so wrought up, that when I did reach home, I could not sleep that night. That was, by far, the worst scare that I ever had in all my life.

Chapter XIV

THE LONG, LONE TRAIL AND HOW WE DODGED THE ROBBERS

An Indian by the name of McKinney—Hereinbefore mentioned—who lived about 50 miles north of my school, but it was 75 miles by the mountain road, was "Trustee Chito" (general supervisor of schools of the Choctaw Nation), and also custodian of the school funds. No bank checks were used, so teachers had to go, or send their reports and vouchers to him for the collections of their salaries. The nation's school funds were deposited in a bank at Clarksville, Texas. McKinney would go there, some 125 miles, each quarter to get money for the teachers. On one of his trips, he was followed across Red River and robbed of six thousand dollars, and ordered to go back and get more money. He went back and drew out more money, but left his pony there, and returned on the railroad, via Texarkana, Little Rock and Fort Smith, Ark., thus coming home from the north, instead of from the south, and so dodged the robbers. He wrote us teachers to come in groups well armed. One evening soon after, there rode up to my house, a white teacher from the county south, and two Indian guards, an old man and a

younger. The white man, named Booth, stayed all night with me, and the two Indians stayed with an Indian family nearby. On the morrow, and getting ready to start early, the old Indian examined my guns. The double-barrel shotgun was all right "Achukamaka" (good), but the small "32 American Bull Dog" revolver, did not suit him, and he said "heap no big," and "Achukama Keyo" (no good). I told him that it would shoot straight, and while we were talking about it, a red bird lit on a low hanging grapevine, about 30 steps away, and I said "see me kill that bird." I shot, missed the bird, but hit the vine. The old Indian said "Achukamakatowa" (heap good). So we started, going the mountain road, that led up among the hills and mountains, between the Mountain Fork River and the Arkansas state line.

Late that afternoon, we came to the only house that we had seen on that long rough road. However, several huts, were not far from the road, hidden in the thick timber. This house was on top of a mountain, and occupied by a man and his family, by the name of Williams, "Bear Killer Williams." He had lived there so long, that the mountain was called "Bear Killer Williams Mountain" and is so designated on all maps of Oklahoma and Arkansas, as it was on the line. Here we stopped for the night. Williams, a half-breed

and his Indian wife and two grown daughters, lived in a dirt-floor-one-room-log cabin, with split-board small side room for kitchen. They all seemed glad to see us, and provided the best they had, for us. For supper, we had corn bread, black coffee and bear meat, and the same for breakfast. The bear meat was too fat for me, but I enjoyed the bread and coffee. Williams was very talkative, and so were the girls, when they got a chance to talk, and plied me with many questions. Not a book or paper in the house. I always carried a pocket Testament, and was asked to use it before we retired. Late in the night, after prayer, the girls had to look at the "Holisso Iskitina" (little book) and asked many questions about its teachings. They all had heard of me, and seemed to be very much interested in what I said to them. Finally, we all retired; the Indians on pallets, while Booth and I were given a shuck bed, in the side room. We were very tired and slept well.

The next morning before leaving, Williams told us, that two days before, three strangers—white men—were seen going north on the mountain road, and cautioned us to keep a look out, especially on our return trip. About the middle of that afternoon, we came to an Indian store, and several cabins, near the river (marked on the maps as "Octavia Post Office").

The Indian also operated a small ferry boat. He told us that he had ferried, three white men across, only a few hours ahead of us, and that they looked to be "Hatak Oka Pullo" (bad men) to him. He went with us down to the river, and we crossed in his boat, one at a time, leading our ponies behind the boat, as they swam across. We were then in about one mile of McKinney's place. He was a well-to-do, educated Indian. His wife was also an educated lady, and they kept several Indian servants, among whom she reigned as queen. On arriving, he called some Indian men and gave them orders about taking care of our horses. We told him, what "Bear Killer Williams" had told us, and what the ferryman had said. He replied that he was expecting trouble, but was well prepared for it.

We retired early, but not until he had placed four well armed young Indians in the barn to guard the horses, then taking his money pouch, from behind an old trunk, in the corner of the room, he counted out what he was owing Booth and I, and then he counted out what he was owing 14 other teachers, in our part of the Choctaw Nation, whose reports he had received through the mails, and placed each teacher's money in an addressed envelope, and unsealed, he handed it all to me—something over twenty-one hundred dollars, saying, it was better to have the school funds, thus di-

vided, in case of trouble and said he expected a raid to be made on his house that night. He placed two other young Indians, also well armed, on each side of his house, telling them to give an alarm, if anything unusual occurred. Booth and I were given a good bed, and the two Indian guards, had pallets in the same room. I divided the money envelopes, and placing them in the foot of each of my heavy home-knit socks, pulled them back on my feet. We slept with our guns near at hand. Nothing happened during the night, and we all felt easier the next morning. Starting early on our return trip—the old Indian leading, said "no talk." We soon arrived at the ferry, and I asked our guide to holler for the ferryman, he said, no, me swim," and plunging into the water, we followed him. When we reached the store, the Indian merchant was away, but his wife was there. The old Indian went in and after talking with her awhile he came out and said, "me no go road, me know trail," and started back toward the river, below the ferry crossing, and we followed him. We swam the river again, and after going about one hundred yards, came to a dim trail, leading south, this we took. The old guide said "three white men bad. He hide somewhere along road, and shoot us, we dodge him. He no follow this trail." The river was now between us and the public road. The trail,

like all Indian trails, was straight, and when the river, in its windings came in the way, we swam across and went on. We swam the river so many times that day, that I lost the count. During the day, we saw three bears, hundreds of squirrels and a large panther jumped over a log to our right and disappeared in the bushes. That panther looked to be as long as a ten-foot fence rail. We also saw several turkey, and I wanted to shoot, but the guide said "keyo" (no).

It was on this trip, that I enjoyed the feast on snakes, hereinbefore referred. The old Indian, would not permit shooting anything for our dinner, and about 3 p. m. we came to a moss covered lake near the river, and the Indians spied some Moccasin snakes, and cutting forked sticks, soon had two large fat ones, beheaded and dressed, while Booth and I had built a quick fire of dry brush, and when it had burned a bed of live coals, the snakes were impaled on sharp sticks, stuck in the ground and leaned over the coals. After being roasted nicely brown, and cooling awhile, we ate them. They were larger than a turkey's neck, with bones much smaller, therefore more meat, which was rich, nutritious and of a pleasant flavor. This stop gave ourselves and ponies a rest spell. After this, we again took up our ride down the trail "Indian style" as we had been traveling all day, with the old Indian

in front, I next, Booth next and the young Indian in the rear. I do not know, but I believe those Indians would have fought until death, in defense of their trust.

About dusk, we arrived at Engle Town (Onsi-Tamaha) where Booth and the Indians stopped for the night, and wanted me to stay with them, but as I "had but one more river to cross"; I had Mr. Gardner, the Indian merchant there to count the money in all the envelopes, I left them with him and went home. About three miles, leaving the road and taking a trail, that a strange white man could not follow, in daytime, much less at night, neither could I at night, but my Indian pony could, and we did. Thus we had dodged the robbers which we would not have done, had it not been for our old Indian guide.

PERO

The Good, Benevolent Indian of Chapter 14—Was Killed in Front of My School House by Sheriff, April 29, 1886

Chapter XV

THE INDIAN'S BENEVOLENCE

Near my school stood an old one-stand cotton gin and grist mill, owned and operated by an Indian, named Pero. During the time of "Impa Exsho" (nothing to eat) the negroes on the river had corn, and would come to this mill to have it ground. Pero's toll was one-fifth of the meal, which he put into a box during the day's run. Poor starving Indians would come to the mill, with empty sacks, and stand around, until all the corn had been ground, then Pero went out and counted the sacks, which were then brought in, and Pero knowing all the men would divide his meal, according to the number in each family, charging them nothing for it. This he did every Saturday, while "Impa Exsho" time lasted.

Pero also had a blacksmith shop, well supplied with tools and repair material, both of wood and iron. One occasion as I went to Ultima-Thule, a small town on the Arkansas state line, I came upon a white man and his grown daughter, who were traveling in a wagon from Texas to Arkansas, to place his daughter with her mother's people, as her mother had recently died in Texas. A wheel had broken down, and their wagon

was pulled off to the side of the road. I stopped and seeing their trouble, asked the man what he was going to do. He said that he wanted to get some tools and build a new wheel. I told him that there was a shop near my house, and that I was sure the Indian would let him use his tools and whatever material he needed, and that he and daughter could stay at my house while he was repairing his wagon. Putting a pole under the end of the axle of the broken wheel, we returned to my house. The Indian readily offered him his shop and whatever he needed to repair his wagon, and also offered to help him. The poor man had no money, and I offered to pay Pero, for the use of his tools and the material that had been used, but he would not accept a cent.

This kind of willing help was the universal rule with all Indians. Who could but love such a generous hearted people?

But the Indians lost their benefactor and friend. Pero was killed. On my 35th birthday, April 29, 1887, about 9 a. m. I noticed several of the children looking out of the door facing west, and appeared to be excited. I asked them "what are you looking at?" and one answered "Sheliffs" (sheriffs). I looked out and saw the sheriff—Thomas Amos, and two of his deputies, all of whom I knew, just as they dismounted

and started northward, with their guns in hand. I looked in that direction, and saw a white man—George Lock, a merchant at Ultima-Thule, riding a mule, coming south, and the Indian Pero walking by his side, and when about 50 yards from the sheriffs, Pero began to raise his gun—a good Winchester. Then the sheriffs began shooting, and he fell. Lock wheeled his mule and went homeward as fast as his mule could run. The sheriffs walked up to where Pero fell, and I walked out to them. I asked "what you kill Pero for?" Amos did not reply, but handed me his warrant. I read it, which commanded him to take Pero, dead or alive. I handed the paper back, and stooping down, asked his squaw, who had run to him, to take her apron off his face, so I could see, if he was dead. She had covered his face, so the sheriffs could not see him dead. I examined him thoroughly, he was dead. I then asked the sheriff if I could bring the children out to see Pero. He consented, after which he went to Pero's house nearby, and brought out a blanket, on which they placed his body, and carried him and placed him on his own bed, then rode away. But I taught no more school that day. Neither the children nor I could get our minds off that awful tragedy that had occurred right out there in front of our door.

The cause of it was that a complaint from the Fed-

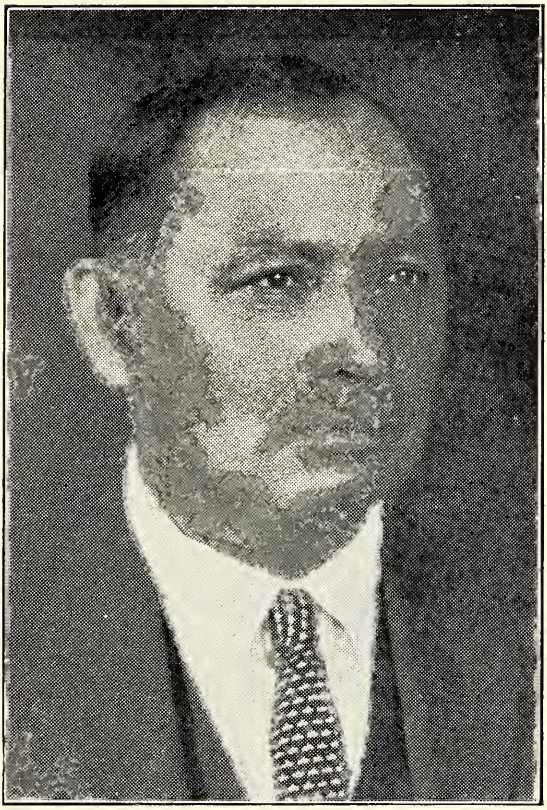
eral authorities had been made against Pero, accusing him of protection of escaped prisoners from the Mississippi penitentiary. They had told Pero that they were not guilty of murder, as charged, and Pero believed them and had fed and otherwise protected them for several months. Sheriff Amos had told him that he was going to have to take him and it would be better for him to surrender. Pero maintained that he had done no wrong, in feeding poor falsely accused hungry men, and that he would never be taken alive, for feeding hungry Indians, and he was not.

When Pero was buried, his fine gun was placed in his rude coffin by his side. Hundreds of Indians were there, but not a tear was shed by any of them, but many Indians seemed to be heartbroken. Pero was a good Indian, and knowing that an Indian stood a poor chance in the Federal courts, he would not submit to an arrest. He fully believed that he was in the right, in protecting and feeding those escaped prisoners, and died in defense of what he fully believed was his duty. That is an Indian's friendship. It will last even 'till death. All things will be made right on the final "Judgment Day."

I will close this chapter with an account of Choctaw customs at their funerals. I was at many death-bed scenes, among the Choctaws, and never witnessed a

tear, but they had a custom, that had come from beyond the beginning of their traditions, to have a funeral on the next full moon after the burial. This funeral they called "A Cry" which is English for their word. For which occasion, the widow, or father or another of nearest kin, would prepare a sufficient quantity of meats and other food, to feed the expected crowd, and a meeting was appointed to be held at the grave of the deceased. The services began on Sunday at about 10 a. m., when a talk would be made by the chief, or some other prominent person, naming the good qualities of the deceased, then the dinner was spread on the ground, and eaten in silence. At 3 p. m. the crowd assembled around the grave, the women on the inside of the circle, with shawls covering their heads, and they would kneel down on and around the grave, while the men stood, and at a word, the women would begin the most piteous heart-melting mourning and wailing, that I ever heard. I was reminded of that which I had read (Matthews 2:18), "In Ramah, there were a great voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning." Also of a custom that prevailed among the Jews, in the days of the Christ, of having professional mourners, to weep at their funerals. No white man though a stranger, can possibly refrain from tears. The Indian men shed tears freely, in their silence. It is impossible

to describe the wonderful effect (psychological, or whatever it is) of those "crys" on the hearts of all who attend them. I always tried to avoid the effect, but so great was the spell, it seemed that my heart would burst, if I did not get relief in much weeping. This they say, is "eating up their grief" and no more sorrow over the loss of dear ones, is witnessed afterward.



E. E. DYER
of Durant, Oklahoma.

Chapter XVI

INDIAN SPEECHES

For further dissemination of the Indian thought, relative to their rights, and the white man's invasion, I here, give the speeches of Logan, Red Jacket, Black Hawk, and Pushamataha; which are ranked with the greatest speeches of the world, ancient or modern, as compiled by the Hon. W. J. Bryan, and published by The Funk & Wagnalls Company of New York, publishers of The Literary Digest, from whom I have received permission to print them in my book. (Taken from the ten volumes of "The World's Greatest Orations, by William Jennings Bryan.")

Logan to Lord Dunmore, (1774)

Logan was born about 1725. Died 1780. His real name was Tahgahjute; by birth he was a Cayuga, but made Chief of the Mingos. He lived for many years in Western Pennsylvania; his family was murdered by the whites in 1774, and he was killed in a fight with other Indians, near Detroit, in 1780.

"I appeal to any white man to say if he ever entered Logan's cabin hungry, and he gave him no meat. If ever he came cold and naked, and he clothed him not?

MY EXPERIENCE WITH INDIANS

During the course of the last long and bloody war, Logan remained idle in his cabin, an advocate of peace. Such was my love for the whites, that my coutrymen pointed to me as they passed and said, 'Logan is the friend of the white man.' I had even thought to live with you, but for the injuries of one man, Colonel Creasup, the last spring, in cold blood and unprovoked murdered all the relations of Logan, not sparing even my women and children. There runs not a drop of my blood in the veins of any living creature. This called on me for revenge. I have sought it. I have killed many. I have glutted my vengeance. For my country, I rejoice at the beams of peace. But do not think mine is the joy of fear. Logan, never felt fear. Logan will not turn on his heel, to save his life. Who is there to mourn for Logan? Not one!

(Note—It was afterward learned that it was not Colonel Creasup, that killed Logan's family, but a whisky peddler who did the vile deed.)

RED JACKET: ON THE RELIGION OF THE WHITE MAN AND THE RED (1805)

Born 1752. Died 1830. His nation, the Senecas, his home, near Geneva. His real name Sogoyewapha, the name "Red Jacket" coming from an embroidered scarlet jacket, presented to him by a British officer, dur-

ing the Revolution. Saw service on the American side in the War of 1812.

This speech was delivered at a council, of the chiefs of the "Six Nations" who had been called to a "Council Fire," built by a missionary named Mr. Cram, who told them of what great work he could and would do for them, if they would accept the religion, he had brought to them—in reply Red Jacket said:

"Friend and Brother: It was the will of the Great Spirit, that we should meet together, this day. He orders all things and has given us a fine day for our council. He has taken his garment from before the sun, and caused it to shine with brightness upon us. Our eyes are opened that we see clearly. Our ears are unstopped that we have been able to hear distinctly the words you have spoken. For all these favors, we thank the Great Spirit, and Him only.

"Brother, this council fire was kindled by you. It was at your request that we came together at this time. We have listened with attention to what you have said. You requested us to speak our minds freely. This gives us great joy, for we consider that we stand upright before you, and can speak what we think. All have heard your voice, and all speak to you now as one man. Our minds are agreed.

"Brother, you say you want an answer to your talk before you leave this place. It is right, you should have one, as you are a great distance from home, and we do not wish to detain you. But first we will look back a little and tell you what our fathers have told us, and what we have heard from the white people. Brother, listen to what we say. There was a time when our forefathers owned this great island. Their seats extended from the rising to the setting sun. The Great Spirit had made it for the use of Indians. He had created the buffalo, the deer and other animals for food. He had made the bear and the beaver. Their skins served us for clothing. He had scattered them over the country, and taught us how to take them. He had caused the earth to produce corn for bread. All this He had done for His red children; because He loved them. If we had some disputes about our hunting grounds, they were generally settled, without the shedding of much blood.

But an evil day came upon us. Your forefathers crossed the great water, and landed on this island. Their numbers were small. They found friends and not enemies. They told us that they had fled from their own country, for fear of wicked men, and had come here to enjoy their religion. They asked for a small seat. We took pity on them and granted their

request, and they sat down among us. We gave them corn and meat; they gave us poison in return.

"The white people, brother, had now found our country. Tidings were carried back, and more came among us. Yet we did not fear them. We took them to be friends. They called us 'brother.' We believed them and gave them a larger seat. At length their numbers had greatly increased. They wanted more land. They wanted our country. Our eyes were opened, and we became uneasy. Wars took place. Indians were hired to fight against Indians, and many of our people were destroyed. They also brought strong liquor among us. It was strong and powerful and has slain thousands.

"Brother, our seats were once large, and your were small. You have now become a great people, and we have scarcely room enough left to spread our blankets. You have got our country, but are not satisfied. You want to force your religion upon us. Brother, continue to listen. You say, that you are sent to instruct us how to worship the Great Spirit agreeably to His mind and if we do not take hold of the religion, which you white people teach, we shall be unhappy hereafter. You say that you are right, and we are lost. How do we know this to be true? We understand that your religion is written in a book. If it was in-

tended for us, as well as you, why has not the Great Spirit given to us, and not only to us, but why did He not give to our forefathers, the knowledge of that book? With the means of understanding it rightly? We only know what you tell us about it. How shall we know when to believe, being so often deceived by the white people?

"Brother, you say there is but one way to serve and worship the Great Spirit. If there is but one religion, why do you white people differ so much about it? Why not all agreed, as you all can read the book?

"Brother, we do not understand these things. We are told that your religion was given to your forefathers, and has been handed down from father to son. We also have a religion that was given to our forefathers, and has been handed down to us, their children. We worship in that way. It teaches us to be thankful for all the favors we receive, to love each other and be united. We never quarrel about religion.

Brother, the Great Spirit has made us all, but He has made a great difference between us in other things, between His white and His red children. He has given us different complexions, and different customs. To you He has given the arts. To these He has not opened our eyes. We know these things to be true. Since He has made a great difference between us in other things

why may we not conclude that He has not given us a different religion, according to our understanding? The Great Spirit does right. He knows what is best for His children. We are satisfied.

"Brother, we do not wish to destroy your religion, or take it from you. We only want to enjoy our own.

"Brother, you say you have not come to get our land, or our money, but to enlighten our minds. I will now tell you that I have been at your meetings and saw you collect money from the meetings. I can not tell what this money was intended for, but suppose it was for your minister, and if we should conform to your way of thinking, perhaps you may want some from us.

"Brother, we have been told that you have been preaching to white people in this place. These people are our neighbors. We are acquainted with them. We will await a little while and see what effect your preaching has upon them. If we find that it does them good, makes them honest, and less disposed to cheat Indians, we will then consider again of what you have said.

"Brother, you now have heard our answer to your talk, and this is all we have to say at present. As we are going to part, we will come and take you by the

hand, and hope that the Great Spirit will protect you on your journey, and return you safe to your friends."

Pushmataha to John C. Calhoun (1824)

(Note: Born in 1765, died in 1824. A chief of the Choctaws; had a notable career as a warrior against the Osage Indians, and in Mexico, and served with the Americans in 1812.)

Pushamataha's name means "The warrior's seat is finished." In 1824, he went to Washington "to brighten the chain of peace," where he was treated with great attention by President Monroe, and John C. Calhoun, then Secretary of War, to whom he made the speech here given, a copy now being preserved in the Official Records, in the War Department. Soon after he died. One of his last requests was that he might be buried with military honors. The procession that followed his body to the Congressional Cemetery, was estimated to be more than a mile long. The side walks, the stoops and windows of houses along the way were thronged with the people, and "minute guns" were fired from the hill of the Capitol. John Randolph, in a eulogy, pronounced in the Senate, characterized him as one of nature's nobility, a man who would have distinguished any society. On his tomb-

stone he is described as a warrior of great distinction.

He was wise in council, eloquent in an extraordinary degree, and on all occasions, and under all circumstances, the white man's friend. Andrew Jackson said that "he was the greatest and bravest Indian he had ever known." During a visit to Lafayette, who was then in Washington, Pushamataha being accompanied by other Indians of his tribe, made the following speech:

"Nearly fifty snows have melted since you drew your sword, as a champion of Washington. With him you fought the enemies of America. You mingled your blood with that of the enemy, and proved yourself a warrior. After you finished that war, you returned to your own country, and now you come back to revisit the land where you are honored by a numerous and a powerful people.

"You see every where the children of those by whose side you went to battle, crowding around you and shaking your hand, as the hand of a father. We have heard these things told in our distant villages, and our hearts longed to see you. We have come and we have taken you by the hand and we are satisfied. This is the first time we have seen you; it will probably be the last. We have no more to say."

Pushamataha was taken ill just after this visit to Lafayette. On his death-bed he said to his Indian

companion. "When you shall come to your homes they will ask you—where is Pushamataha? and you will say to them, 'he is no more'. They will hear the tidings as the sound of the fall of a mighty oak, in the stillness of the woods."

His speech to John C. Calhoun was as follows: "Father, I have been here at the council house (the U. S. Capitol) for some time, but I have not talked. I have not been strong enough to talk. You shall hear me talk today. I belong to another district. You no doubt have heard of me. I am Pushamataha.

"Father, when in my own country, I often looked toward this council house, and wanted to come here. I am in trouble. I will tell my distress. I feel like a small child, not half as high as its father, who comes up to look into his father's face, hanging in the bend of his arm, to tell him his troubles. So father, I hang in the bend of your arm, and look in your face; and now hear me speak:

"Father, when I was in my own country, I heard there were men appointed to talk for us (The Indian Commissioners). I would not speak there; I chose to come and speak in this beloved house; for Pushamataha can boast and say, and tell the truth, that none of his fathers nor grandfathers, or any Choctaw ever drew bow, against the United States. They have always

been friendly. We have held the hands of the United States so long, that our nails are long like bird's claws, and there is no danger of their slipping out. Father, I have come to speak. My Nation has always listened to the application of the white people. They have given of their country, until it is very small. I came here when a young man, to see my father, Jefferson. He told me, 'if we ever got in trouble, we must run and tell him.' I am come. This is a friendly talk; it is like that of a man who meets another, and says: 'how do you do?' Another of my tribe will talk further. He shall say what Pushamataha would say, were he stronger."

Speech of Black Hawk to General Street (1832)

Note: Born in 1767. Died 1838. Succeeded his father as chief of the Sac Indians in 1778; acted against the Americans in the war of 1812, because of the occupation by the whites, of certain vacated lands; began the Black Hawk war, in 1831, defeated in two battles in 1832. Surrendered, taken east and confined in Fortress Monroe until June, 1833. Before taken into this prison Black Hawk was taken to Washington, and was presented to President Andrew Jackson in the

White House, where he saluted him in words, which then could not have raised the smile, which they raise now. "I am a man, you are another."

Black Hawk's speech to General Street is as follows:

"You have taken me prisoner, with all my warriors. I am much grieved, for I expected, if I did not defeat you, to hold out much longer, and give you more trouble before I surrendered. I tried hard to bring you into ambush, but your last general understood Indian fighting. I determined to rush on you, and fight you face to face. I fought hard. But your guns were well aimed. The bullets flew, like birds in the air, and whizzed by our ears, like the wind through the trees, in the winter. My warriors fell around me. It began to look dismal. I saw my evil day at hand. The sun rose dim on us in the morning, and at night it sank in a dark cloud, and looked like a ball of fire. That was the last sun that shone on Black Hawk. His heart is dead, and no longer beats quick in his bosom. He is now a prisoner of the white man; they will do with him as they wish; but he can stand torture, and is not afraid of death. He is no coward. Black Hawk is an Indian. He has done nothing for which an Indian ought to be ashamed. He has fought for his countrymen, against white men, who came, year after

year, to cheat them and take away their lands. You know the cause of our making war. It is known to all white men. They ought to be ashamed of it. The white men despise the Indians, and drive them from their homes. They smile in the face of the poor Indian, to cheat him; they shake him by the hand, to gain his confidence, to make him drunk, and to deceive him. We told them to let us alone, and keep away from us; but they followed on, and beset our paths, and they coiled themselves among us, like the snakes. They poisoned us with their touch. We were not safe. We lived in danger. We looked up to the Great Spirit. We went to our Father (The President). We were encouraged. His great council gave us fair words and big promises, but we got no satisfaction. Things were growing worse. There were no deer in the forest. The opossum and the beaver had fled. The springs were drying up. Our squaws and papooses were without food to keep them from starving. We called a great council, and built a large fire. The spirit of our fathers arose, and spoke to us, to avenge our wrongs or die. We set up the war-whoop and dug up the tomahawk. Our knives were ready, and the heart of Black Hawk swelled high in his bosom when he led his warriors to battle. He is satisfied. He will go to the world of

spirits contented. He has done his duty. His father will meet him there and commend him.

"Black Hawk, is a true Indian, he disdains to cry like a woman. He feels for his wife, his children and his friends. But he does not care for himself. He cares for the Nation and the Indians. They will suffer. He laments their fate.

"Farewell my Nation! Black Hawk tried to save you, and avenge your wrongs. He drank the blood of some of the whites. He has been taken prisoner, and his plans are crushed. He can do no more. He is near his end. His sun is setting, and will rise no more. Farewell to Black Hawk."

(Note: He was liberated from prison, after a few years confinement, and died among his people, a broken spirited, but a brave Indian.)

Speech of Brant, Chief of the Mohawks, Delivered in London, 1776

Born in 1742. Died 1807. Educated at Lebanon, Conn. Interpreter and Secretary to Sir William Johnson. Visited London in 1776, and again in 1784. Commanded the Indians at the battle of Oriskany and Newton. Translated parts of the New Testament into the Mohawk tongue. Delivered this speech in London,

before Lord George Germaine, Secretary of State, on March 14th, 1776.

Brant had gone to London to secure for the Mohawk Indians, redress for lands which they had lost on the Mohawk, and upper Susquehanna Rivers. Redress was promised them but it was understood that the Indians meanwhile in the war already begun with the Colonies, would give their support to the King. Out of this understanding proceeded the activity of Brant on the New York frontier in aid of the royal cause.

"Brother Gorah, we have crossed the great lake (Atlantic Ocean) and come to this Kingdom with our superintendent, Colonel Johnson, from our confederacy of the Six Nation and their allies, that we might see our father, the great King, and join in informing him, his counsellors and wise men, of the good intentions of the Indians, our brothers, and of their attachment to his majesty and his government.

"Brother, the disturbances in America, give great trouble to all our nations, and many strange stories have been told to us, by the people of that country. The Six Nations, who always loved the King, sent a number of their chiefs and warriors with their superintendent to Canada last summer, where they engaged their allies to join them in the defense of that country,

and when it was invaded by the New England people they alone defeated them.

"Brother, in that engagement, we had some of our chiefs, and several of our best warriors killed and wounded, and the Indians think it very hard that they should have been deceived by the white people in that country, many returning in great numbers, and no white people supporting the Indians; they were obliged to return to their villages and sit still. We now, brother, hope to see these bad children chastised, and that we may be able to tell the Indians, who have always been faithful and ready to assist the King, what his majesty intends. Brother, the Mohawks, our particular Nation, have on all occasions shown their zeal and loyalty to the great King; yet they have been very badly treated, by the people in that country. The city of Albany laying an unjust claim to the lands on which our lower castle is built (the lower castle of the Mohawks was Fort Hunter) as one Klock and others, do to those of Canajoharie, our upper village.

"We have been assured by our late great friend, Sir William Johnson (Sr.), who never deceived us, and we know he was told so by the King and the wise men here would do us justice. But this, notwithstanding all our applications has never been done, and it makes us very uneasy. We also feel for the distress in which

our brothers on the Susquehanna are likely to be involved by a mistake made in the boundary we settled in 1768. This also our superintendent has laid before the King. We have therefore, only to request that his majesty will attend to this matter. It troubles our nation, and they can not sleep easy in their beds. Indeed, it is very hard, when we have let the King's subjects have so much land for so little value, they should want to cheat us in this manner, of the small spots we have left, for our women and children to live on.

"We are tired out of making complaints, and getting no redress. We, therefore, hope that the assurances now given by the superintendent may take place, and that he may have it in his power to procure justice. We shall truly report all we hear from you, to the Six Nations, on our return. We are well informed there have been many Indians in this country, who came without any authority from their own, and gave us much trouble. We desire to tell you, brother, that this is not our case. We are warriors known to all the nations, and we are now here by approbation of many of them, whose sentiments we speak.

"Brother, we hope that these things may be considered and that the King, or his great men, will give us such answer, as will make our hearts light and glad, before we go, and strengthen our hands, so we may

join our superintendent, Colonel Johnson, in giving satisfaction to all our nations when we report to them, on our return; for which purpose we hope soon to be accommodated with the passage."

Speech of Tecumseh to Govenor Harrison at Vincennes

(Delivered to the Council at Vincennes, on Aug. 12, 1810. Large tracts of land had been sold in Tecumseh's absence, by the Indians on both sides of the Wabash River, contrary to treaty stipulations. Tecumseh, was born about 1768, and died in 1813. A chief of the Shawnee, and twin brother to Elskwatawa, who was defeated by Harrison at Tippecanoe. He joined the British in the war of 1812. Fought in several battles in Canada. Commanded the right wing of the allied Indian and British forces. Was defeated in the battle of the Thames by General Harrison.)

"It is true, I am a Shawnee. My fathers were warriors. Their son is a warrior. From them I take only my existence, from my tribe I take nothing. I am the maker of my own fortune, and Oh! that I could make that of my red people, and of my country, as great as the conceptions of my mind, when I think of

the Spirit that rules the universe. I would not then come to Governor Harrison to ask him to tear up the treaty, and to obliterate the landmark, but I would say to him 'Sir, you have liberty to return to your own country.'

"The being within, communing with past ages, tells me that once, nor until lately, there was no white man on this continent, that it then all belonged to the red men, children of the same parents, placed on it by the Great Spirit that made them, to keep it, to traverse it, to enjoy its productions, and to fill it with the same race, once a happy race; since made miserable by the white people, who are never contented but always encroaching.

"The way, and the only way to stop this evil, is for all the red men to unite, in claiming a common and equal right in the land, as it was first and should be yet; for it was never divided, but belongs to all, for the use of each. For no part has the right to sell, even to each other, much less to strangers—those who want all, and will not do with less. The white people have no right to take the land from the Indians, because they had it first, it is theirs. They may sell, but all must join. Any sale not made by all, is not valid. The last sale is bad. It was made by a part only. Part do not know how to sell. It requires all to make a

bargain for all. All red men have equal rights to the unoccupied land. The right to occupy is as good at once place as another. There can not be two occupations in the same place. The first excluded all others. It is not so in hunting or traveling, for there the same ground will serve many, as they may follow each all day, but the camp is stationary, and that is occupancy. It belongs to the first who sits down on his blanket or skins, which he has thrown upon the ground, and until he leaves it, no other has a right."

Another Speech by Tecumseh—This to General Proctor

(Delivered in the name of the Indian Chiefs and warriors to Major General Henry A. Proctor, as the representative of their great father the King, a short time before the battle of the Thames, in Canada, which occurred on Oct. 5, 1813. This speech was first published in 1813, in the National Intelligencer of Washington, with a note saying, it was "found among General Proctor's papers after his fight.")

"Father, listen to your children! You have them now all before you. The war before this, our British father gave the hatchet to his red children, when old chiefs were alive. They are now dead. In that war

JAMES DYER, JR.

Age 33. Elected as Constable When 21. Served in Oklahoma Legislature 1921, 1923 and 1924

our father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our father took them by the hand, without our knowledge, and we were afraid that our father will do so again, at this time.

"Summer before last, when I came forward with my red brethren and was ready to take up the hatchet in favor of our British father, we were told, not to be in a hurry, that he had not yet determined to fight the Americans. Listen! When war was declared, our father stood up, and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was ready to strike the Americans. That he wanted our assistance, and that he would certainly get us our lands back, which the Americans had taken from us. Listen! You told us at that time to bring forward our families to this place and we did so, and you promised to take care of them, and that they should want for nothing, while the men would go and fight the enemy. That we need not trouble ourselves about the enemy's garrisons. That we knew nothing about them, and that our father would attend to that part of the business—you also told your red children, that you would take good care of your garrison here, which made our hearts glad. Listen! When we were last at the Rapids, it was true we gave you little assistance. It was hard to fight people who live like ground hogs. Father, listen! Our fleet has gone out, we know they have

fought, we have heard the great guns, but know nothing of what has happened, to our father with one arm. Our ships have gone one way, and we are much astonished to see our father tying up everything and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know what his intentions are. You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands. It made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish. Our great father, the King, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us that you would never draw your feet off British ground; but now father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so, without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal that carries it tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops it between its legs and runs off.

"Listen, father! The Americans have not yet defeated us by land, neither are we sure they have done so by water. We therefore wish to remain here and fight our enemy—should they make their appearance. If they then defeat us, we will then retreat with our father.

"At the battle of the Rapids, last war, the Americans certainly defeated us and when we retreated to our father's fort, in that place the gates were shut against us. We were afraid that it would now be the case, but instead of that we now see our British father pre-

paring to march out of his garrison. Father, you have got the guns and the ammunition, which our great father sent for his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us, and you may go and welcome, for us, our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit. We are determined to defend our lands, and if it is His will, we wish to leave our bones upon them."

Speech of Peter Wilson on the Empire State

(Delivered before the New York Historical Society, on May 4, 1847. Peter Wilson was a Cayuga Chief, whose Indian name was Waowawanaonk, and means "They hear his voice." Printed from a copy in the archives of the Society.)

"You see before you an Iroquois; yes, a native American! You have heard the history of the Indian trails, and the geography of the State of New York, before it was known to the palefaces. The land of Ganunno was once laced by these trails from Albany to Buffalo, trails that my people have trod for centuries—worn deep by the feet of the Iroquois that they became your own roads of travel, when my people no longer walk in them. Your highways still lie in those trails, the same lines of communication bind

one part of the long house to the other. My friend has told you that the Iroquois have no monuments. These highways are their monuments; this land of Ganunno, this Empire State is our monument. We wish to lay our bones under its soil, among those of our fathers. We shall not long occupy much room in living—still less when we are gone.

"Have we, the first holders of this prosperous region, no longer a share in that history? Glad were your fathers to sit down upon the threshold of the Long House. Rich did they then hold themselves, in getting the mere sweepings from its door. Had our forefathers spurned you from it, when the French were thundering at the opposite end to cut a passage through and drive you into the sea, whatever has been the fate of other Indians, the Iroquois might still have been a nation, and I, too might have had—a country!

"There was a prophet of our race in early times who said that the time would come when troubles would fall upon the Indians, so that they would knock their heads together. When that time came they were to search for a large palm tree, and shelter their heads beneath its shade, letting their bodies be buried at its roots, and cause that tree to flourish and become a fitting monument of the Iroquois race. That time has come. We are in trouble and distress—we knock our

WILLARD DYER

Third Daughter of E. E. Dyer, Now a Student at Durant High School. Her Specialties: Singing and Dancing

heads together in agony. We desire to find a palm tree that we may lie down and die beneath it.

"We wish that palm tree to be the State of New York, that it may be the monument of the Iroquois."

MODERN INDIAN BABY

ADDENDUM

THE MODERN INDIAN

I wrote "My Experiences With Indians" just as those many strange experiences occurred, from 1869 to 1888, now 56 to 41 years ago; from many of the most interesting things held in faithful memory, up to three years ago, that my children and grandchildren might know of them, for conditions, even among the Indians have changed, wonderfully changed from those earlier dates until now.

Prior to this writing and for many years, I had thought but little about them, but my recollection of them began to revive, and grow more and more distinct. I would wake up in the night, and involuntarily my memory would take hold of them, and unfold them one by one, very distinctly, as each experience occurred many years ago. I was utterly unable to dismiss those memories from my mind. I made no effort to recollect them, had only to lie quietly and view anew the passing of all those events in panorama, and the same would happen the next night and the next, until I became really interested, and enjoyed those precious, and in most part delightful memories. One night after witnessing the scene, as a moving picture show, I seemed

to hear a voice, "write—write—WRITE" and so strong did that impression become, that I began to write, nevertheless at that time I was mayor of my town—Alvarado, Texas—and a very busy man, but whenever I would undertake to write, the scene became so distinct and real to me, that all I had to do was take dictation from my memory, and this convinced me that as the psychologists claim, that the sub-conscious mind was the storehouse of the memory, from which nothing is ever effaced or really forgotten.

After I had committed to paper all those precious memories, I was requested by my local editor, to allow him run the story as a serial, in his paper (The Alvarado Bulletin) which I did, and many readers of that paper began to call on me and urge that I bring the story out in book form. That was my first thought of writing a book. Now that it is written and submitted to a publisher, he is calling on me for more matter for my Indian stories.

When I began to think of what I should add to my story, I thought of those same Indians and their children, and of the wonderful progress they were making among all lines of advancing civilization, which had fully justified my estimate of the Indian's moral and mental capacities, referred to in former chapters. Their

LILLIAN THELMA HUDSON
Child of Peter Hudson of Antlers, Okla.

high ideals of virtue, honesty, truth and abiding fidelity to all that which was right and just.

Under their former tribunal conditions and ancient customs, they were happy and contented people, truly religious, worshipping their Shelombish Holitopa Ma (The Great Spirit) the white man's God, with a devotion truly humble and consecrated, that would shame many of the white men, notwithstanding their superior claims religiously.

They were naturally loath to give up their customs and manner of life, and take up the manner of life and ways of the white man, so many of whom had dealt so treacherously with them, and being juberous of the white man's religion, which some professing to possess, committed so many and heinous crimes among the red people. Who that knows these things can blame them from holding back, preferring the customs and traditions of their forefathers?

Looking back now from this date (1925) it seems that Destiny willed a change, and that the great moral character of purity and uprightness of the Indian, had been held by their ancient traditions—in its original purity until this time, of so much impurity and chicanery especially since the great World War.

The Indian that never betrayed a friend or broke a promise, or treaty and from the earliest days of the

white man in America, was a true and dependable friend to the worthy white man, and had conserved all those noble qualities of honor and justice, until the hour struck for his advance. Doubtless the great Ruler of people and nations, destined that the Indian go forward, and be a blessing to the people among whom it became his destiny to live, and so badly needed the beautiful trait of character the red man would give, both by precept and example.

No sooner had citizenship and improved educational facilities been given the Indian, than we hear their voice in the councils of both State and Nation. Witness Senator Owens now in the United States Senate, and James Dyer, for the last three years in the Legislature of Oklahoma, and Charles D. Carter, who is Congressman from this district and has been for seventeen years. The last Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Oklahoma Legislature was Murrey Gibbons, a Choctaw Indian from Purcell, Okla.

The Indians are a class of people that love their country. They will do anything to protect it, if they are made to believe that they are protecting their rights. You will note that some of the bravest fighters that crossed over and faced the German front lines, were Choctaw Indians, in fact one, Joseph Oklahambi, who, next to York, was the greatest hero in the World War

MRS. JAMES DYER, JR.

A Well Educated Half Blood Choctaw Indian. She Taught School Until She Married James Dyer, Jr. She Is Now a Member of the Ladies' Federated Clubs of Oklahoma.

—however you never hear a word of heroic expression made by these boys. All they ask is that they be let alone, to enjoy the existence that God gave them.

They are not crying for help from the government. They are not asking the public to look after them because they wore the uniform. They do not consider that the world owes them a living. They only take it that they did their duty, and that is all. Many others occupying places of honor and trust, and never yet has an Indian betrayed a trust imposed in him.

I here again ask the kind reader to turn back and read those great Indian speeches herein given. Speeches selected by William J. Bryan and placed in his books of the "World's Most Famous Orations," and was copyrighted by Funk & Wagnalls Company of New York, and by their courtesy I am permitted to use them here. Models they are, for simple expressions of great truths. Fundamental truth in the laws of all nations, from the beginning and on.

The Indians' language has comparatively few words, and he learns to express himself fully with these few words, such is his habit of speech, hence the greatness of those speeches, that contain thought, and not a superabundance of words, words and more words, by which most speeches are burdened, to the exclusion of original thought.

I herewith supply my publisher with several pictures of the modern Indian. Look at them, study their physiognamy, even from those small children on up to the older ones, and catch that impression, compelling as it is, of the latent mental and moral qualities, that is already telling upon the society where they live and unconsciously wield, both as teachers and leaders, in the advancing civilization.

In the Old Indian's Lamentation, as given in a former chapter, the education of the young Indians was detrimental to the lives all who had to live under their former tribunal conditions, and customs, but see what an evolution has been wrought in the last half century, and the next half century will tell even more largely, by the further development of these truly great people —The American Indian.

I will close this chapter on the Modern Indian with a few excerpts from a letter received from E. E. Dyer, only a short time ago:

"Hon. J. James, Alvarado, Texas. My dear old-time friend: I have just received a copy of the Cleburne Daily Times, and in it I find your picture, and note that the paper states that you spent several years among the Choctaw Indians, as a missionary.

"This of course calls to my mind the days of the long ago, when you were at old Stock Bridge, trying

LILLIAN DYER

Daughter of Aaron Dyer, Deceased; a Grand Daughter of Chief Jefferson Gardner

to guide to right direction, the destinies of a bunch of more or less ignorant boys and girls.

"Of the Choctaw tribe, of which I am one, and I have often thought since then, what a pity that men like you were not scattered all over this country, even now when * * * * * who are now occupying the most part of the country today.

"At that time we had a few lawless Indians, but as a whole, we had men when once sworn to their duties would accomplish what they were entrusted to do, or die.

"You noticed another thing in those days, and that was that most Choctaw Indians were deeply religious, and took their meetings, or church gatherings very seriously when they went to worship their Shilombish Holitopa (Great Spirit). * * * * * *

"I can recall with pleasant memories the little old log house, that stood on the hill, beyond the ever bubbling spring, which flowed about one hundred yards away, and the split-log benches we used to sit on, and I can also recall that after the Indian children got used to you, and after you had made them your friends, and how they would study and try to get ahead of each other. * * * * * and even now when I think about those things and times, when no one scarcely knew any evil, and everything was held in common,

one for the other, I sometimes think after all, civilization is not hardly what it should be.

"I and my bunch of Indians now live in Durant, and presume will be here until the end of my days. This is one of the finest school and church towns in the state. A child can start in here and finish with a lifetime teacher's certificate. My two oldest daughters are graduates of the high school and also of the Southeastern State Normal, and are teaching. They are natural born artists, can paint, make music on most any kind of an instrument. My third girl will finish in the high school this year. * * * * * *

"Sometimes I get tired of living in town, and like the Indian I am, want to go back, away back in the woods, but for the sake of my children I must stay here and make the best of it. * * * * * *

"I am glad to hear from you at any time, for I know you are a true friend of us Indians, and I am sure that at all times you speak a good word for us Indians, and since at this time the five civilized tribes, are in a way oppressed by the United States Government, and * * * * * *. Any time you will speak for us it might help to relieve the sad condition we are in now.

"Now as to the pictures, and a brief sketch of each of us:

FLODELLE DYER

Age 23. The Oldest Daughter of E. E. Dyer, Since Graduation From the Southeastern State Normal of Durant, Oklahoma, Has Taught School in the Durant Junior High School. Her Specialty Is Music and Literature. Pianist for the State Christian Endeavor Convention

ADDENDUM

"No. 1 is that of myself, Elliston E. Dyer, age 48 years, and a former pupil of Prof. J. James, from the age of 8 to 12, and received but little else in the way of an education, except what I got from him who is now an honored citizen of Alvarado, Texas. At the age of 18, the then legal age in the old Choctaw Nation, I was appointed Collector of Royalties in the Second District of Choctaw Nation, by the then Principal Chief, Jefferson Gardner. At the expiration of this term, I was elected as Recording Secretary of the House of Representatives, in the Choctaw Council, and continued in that capacity until the ending of the Tribunal Government in 1906, and now live in Durant, Okla.

"No. 2—Flodell Dyer, my oldest daughter, aged 23. Graduate of the Durant High School, and also of the Southeastern State Normal, and a teacher for four years in the Junior High School of Durant. Her specialties are Music and Literature, and is Pianist of the State Christian Endeavor Society.

"No. 3—This is my second daughter, Winnona, aged 21. Also a graduate of the State Normal, and holder of a life Teacher's Certificate, and is now Principal of the High School at Achille, Okla. Her specialties are Home Economics, Domestic Science, Music and Literature.

"No. 4 is Willard Dyer, my third daughter, yet in the High School at Durant, and will graduate this year. Her specialties are Music, Singing and Dancing. She is our little Injun Flapper, and full of nerve, life and pep. An entertainer for all religious and other societies.

"No. 5 is my brother, James Dyer, Jr., aged 33. Was elected constable at the age of 21, and a member of the State Legislature in 1921, and is yet a member, by re-election.

"No. 6—Mrs. James Dyer, Jr., a well educated half-blood Choctaw. She taught in the High Schools, until she married James Dyer, Jr. She is now a member of Ladies Federated Clubs of Oklahoma.

"No. 7 is Lillian Dyer, only daughter of my brother, Aaron Dyer and wife, both now deceased, and is being reared by my brother James Dyer and wife. She is also a fine musician for her age. She was a grand-daughter of Principal Chief Jefferson Gardner.

"Nos. 8, 9 and 10, are the sweet children of Peter Hudson of Antlers, Okla."

(*These pictures speak more eloquently of the modern Indian than can any words at my command.—J. J.*)

I have now come to the finis of my book, and I offer it to the public, with all its imperfections, as to its literary phase, I could have written much more

WINNONA DYER

Age 21. Second Daughter of E. E. Dyer. Graduate and Holder of Life Teacher's Certificate in the Southeastern State Normal of Durant, Oklahoma. Now Principal of Achilli High School, Achilli, Oklahoma, Her First Year as Teacher. Her Specialties are Home Economics, Domestic Science and Literature

commendatory of a people I love. I love them because of the great virtues naturally inherent in their natures, and knowing them as a people as well as I do, my conscience would not permit me to say less. They are not angels on earth, neither are they perfect, and a few are criminally inclined, but as a mass, they are the best people I have ever known, and if the governmental regulations, will permit them to live their natural lives, untrammeled, they will be a blessing to their country in many ways.

With all my soul I am praying God's richest blessings upon them. Amen.

J. JAMES.

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JAMES, JOHN
MY EXPERIENCE WITH INDIANS

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